SRI CHIDAMBARAM
RAMALINGA SWAMIJI
HIS LIFE MISSION & STUDIES.



1. Sri Chidambaram Ramalinga Swamiji.

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SRI CHIDAMBARAM RAMALINGA SWAMIJI

HIS LIFE, MISSION & STUDIES

BY

T. V. G. CHETTY

WITH FOREWORDS

BY

V. P. MADHAVA RAO, B.A., C.I.E.

Retired Dewan of Travancore, Mysore & Baroda

AND

Lt. Col. P. A. SKIPWITH.

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IN

REVERED MEMORY

OF

THE LATE M. R. RY., TRANQUEBAR.

VENKATARAMA CHETTY GARU,

District Munsiff,

THE EDITOR'S FATHER

THIS HUMBLE WORK

HAS BEEN

MOST AFFECTIONATELY

INSCRIBED.

FOREWORD

I HAVE been requested by Mr. Govindarajulu Chetty, to write a foreword to his book, *Sri Ramalinga Swamiji's Life • Work and Studies*. I have great pleasure in complying with his request, not because I feel competent for the work, but because I am in full sympathy with the object of the author to keep the lamp of Hindu Religion and Spirituality burning in spite of the onslaughts of the materialistic West.

The Saint, whose life and work are portrayed in this book, is well known in Southern India and an account of the same deserves to be handed down to generations yet unborn. The author has done a great service to the public by undertaking the publication of this book. It contains also some verses of the *Arulpa* with translation and explanation in English for the benefit of those who are not familiar with the Swamiji's works and the Tamil Language.

I have myself had some portions of the book read out to me by the author and I was greatly struck by the fact that the Saint Ramalingam anticipated our ideas of Universal Brotherhood and the Federation of man by founding a Sabha to promote them so long ago as 1867. I was also much impressed by the fair knowledge of the Science of *Yogic Sadhan* displayed therein. I sincerely hope that a perusal of this book would stimulate interest in the Swamiji's complete works and help earnest students of Hindu Religion and Philosophy to follow the great ideals of the Hindu Religion.

V. P. MADHAVA RAO, B.A., C.I.E.,
Retired Dewan of Travancore, Mysore & Baroda.

"PATAN BHAVAN,"
BANGALORE,
12th March, 1933.

FOREWORD

In this 'The Iron Age' there are few men whose spirituality is sufficiently developed to enable them to penetrate the veil of *Maya* which surrounds us and to get a glimpse of the truth beyond it

Moreover, when any man does succeed in giving the world an account of the insight he has gained the account is apt to be lost in the indifference of later generations.

Much credit is therefore due to Mr. Govindarajulu Chetty who, in his "Sri Ramalinga Swamiji's Life," has supplied a record of the words and deeds of a great Jivan Mukta.

Although it is not to be expected that the accounts of "miracles" will prove acceptable to all readers, there are many words of wisdom in the book which may well be recommended to the whole world.

The reference to the earth on page 35 is not however tenable.*

FRANCE, P. A. SKIPWITH,
4th May, 1935. *Lieutenant-Colonel.*

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*Please *vide* Appendix III for explanation.

EDITOR'S PREFACE.

This little book has been ushered into existence, to present the English-knowing public with a bird's eye-view of the "Life, Mission and Studies" of the great Tamilian Saint Sri Chidambaram Ramalinga Swamiji of holy memory. It is the outcome of an intermittent labour of over 12 years on the part of the Editor; for, it was originally designed to commemorate the Centenary of the birth of Swamiji, which took place on the 11th of October 1923. Although the task was taken up in hand quite in advance of the time, its progress was seriously hampered with by a series of domestic cares and worries and the consequent mental depression on his part; these combined with the difficulty experienced in getting ready the necessary photographs, blocks and map constitute the main causes for the failure to make the appearence of this publication synchronize with the said celebration. Nevertheless, it is hoped that even now its appearence will not be without its due significance. And to many, it may doubtless

prove a companionable little volume worthy of their acceptance and study.

It was the intention of the Swamiji to inculcate into the minds of the mortal men the Love Divine as the *sine qua non* of their existence. Having regard to this, it has been given, even within the narrow compass of available space here, due prominence to the catholicity of his commendable teaching acceptable alike to the most uncompromising bigots and the out and out sceptics save those who having eyes would not see, and who, having ears, would not hear.

Recourse has been had to insert in this volume appropriate illustrations—14 in number including one of multi-colour print describing the interior of the Gnana Sabha dealt with in Chapter VII and a Guide Map specially prepared to accompany the Itinerary in Appendix II—which, it is believed, will be welcome additions to the main treatise. Under Footnotes the several allusions and words occuring throughout the text and belonging to the nomenclature of Hindu Phraseology have been explained; in doing so, it

has been endeavoured to weigh the importance of every word preceding a description and ample justice has been done in the case of all such words as called for a little more than mere definitions which will probably be found both interesting and instructive.

The editor derived not a little comfort and solace by a study of Swamiji's Life and Works during the days of his domestic calamities which even compelled him to sever his connection with H. E. H. the Nizam's Government Mint Works of which he had been the Office Superintendent. Personally therefore, he entertains the greatest respect and the most devoted admiration for the Swamiji, not only on account of the extreme sanctity of his exhalted position, but also for the outline and draft of an ideal yet simple, plain and well meaning scheme of Life drawn up by him for the liberation of humanity. It is said that—

> " When a man puts in circulation
> A good religious book
> He sets in motion an influence
> The extant and duration of which

He cannot estimate,"

and that

"Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime."

If after a careful perusal of these pages, a desire has expressed itself upon the minds of the reflective readers impelling them to higher aims and nobler endeavours in the sacred realms of the spirit, the editor's humble attempt at this compilation, though it was to him purely a labour of love, shall not have been made in vain; for, what can be the greater aim for the life of man than to kill away the brute in him to establish humanness and to evolve Divinity from the same, so that he may at all times live at-one-with-Him in the great radiant joy of being.

Perhaps this little publication is but the forerunner of many more of its kind in an exhaustive and more amplified form, and perhaps too, there may yet be forthcoming from the West many Popes to explore the glories of this latest addition to the Tamil Literature.

One thing remains unsaid here. This is devoid of all literary pretentions. Further,

the editor does not lay any claim to originality and does not pose to be quite accurate in matters of detail, but has sketched out the main features of the Life and the Gospel of the Swamiji as accurately as possible. The gentle readers, it is hoped, will therefore imbibe the spirit rather than the letter, and acquit him of all his faults and failings. Helpful suggestions and sympathetic criticisms of any kind towards the improvement of this book will be thankfully received.

In conclusion, he takes this opportunity of expressing his grateful thanks to the late Venerable Sahib, V. P. Madhava Rao, B.A., C.I.E., and Lt-Col. P. A. Skipwith for the forewords they have been pleased to favour him with. His thanks are also due to his revered Rao Sahib N. Thiagaraja Aiyer Avl., M.A., L.T., F.M.U., not only for his Appreciation appearing under Chapter XIV, but also for his corrections and valuable suggestions throughout this work. Lastly, to one and all of his friends particularly to Mr. Tholuvure V. Chengelvaraya Mudaliar Avl., of the local St. Joseph's College son of the Swamiji's

principal chela and Mr. G. Balakrishna Naidu Garu, who helped him in divers ways, but for which this book could not have seen the light of day, his thanks are none the less sincere.

BANGALORE CANTT.,
SOUTH INDIA,
May, 1935.

The Editor.

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CHAPTER I

Introductory dealing generally with the pre-eminence of India in matters, temporal and spiritual.

INDIA is the land of Dharma.[1] She is the land of Mysticism. She is the Wisdom-land. She is the home of Charity and the fountain-head of Spirituality. She is the seat of a very ancient civilisation—a civilisation hoary with antiquity—which is unlike that of Egypt or Babylon in that she has not ceased to be a potent factor of influence in the modern World. She is the cradle of the Vedas,[2] that stupendous code of immutable

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[1] Dharma (Religion) is the essence of goodness in life which secures for a man worldly and other-worldly happiness and Salvation. The process for securing this is twofold, viz.—

(1) the annihilation of animality in man to establish humanity in the first place, and

(2) secondly, the evolving of divinity from humanity.

It is co-extensive with God and therefore, Eternal and Immutable.

[2] Vedas containing, as they do, *Mantras* forming the earliest Scriptures in the Sanskrit religious works of the Hindus, are the revelations from God Almighty heard by *Rishis*; hence they are also called *sruti* (that which was heard). The word *Veda* also means an instrument which aids to unfold news, intelligence or message. These are divided into four parts respectively known as the *Rig-Veda*, *Yajur-Veda*, *Sama-Veda* and *Adharva-Veda* in which are treasured the truth and

laws forming, as it were, the very foundation of Hindu society and in whose praise, the great intellects of the West have lavished the choicest epithets in superlatives of pre-eminence, so much so, that it is still a wonder among them if it is all man-made or God-sent. It is upon this lap of earth, in the traditionally renowned battle-field of Kurukshetra, [1] Lord Krishna [2] the destroyer of Adharma [3] and the protector of Dharma, gave his world-famous

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knowledge accumulated from ages past. It is the first and the foremost of the Indian works belonging to the "World Literature." It is considered as the gift of God, so much so, in speaking of the sterling worth of the Upanishads, a part and parcel of the Vedas, Schopenhauer a great German Philosopher, says that its teaching represents "the fruit of the highest human knowledge and wisdom" and "contains almost super-human conceptions, the originators of which can hardly be regarded as mere mortals." And this opinion has been fully endorsed by Professor Max Muller as well.

[1] Kurukshetra otherwise known as Brahmavarta or Holy Land is described in Sanskrit literature as being between the rivers Saraswati and Drishadvati in Northern India.

[2] Krishna is the incarnation of Vishnu of the Hindu Trinity. He was born about the end of Dvaparayuga or the third age of the world as the eighth son of Vasu Deva and Devaki for the establishment of virtue in the land. His earlier days are full of juvenile and romantic feats, pointing a moral of the highest importance to mankind. He destroyed Kamsa, the representative of the principle Evil, and although he was not certainly the hero, he did figure as a great chief and played the most important part in the great war of Mahabarata. He is the author of Bhagavad Gita in which, He has bequeathed to the world at large, a knowledge more secret than secret itself.

[3] Adharma is that which is not Dharma.

Discourses known as the Bhagavad Gita,[1] or "Song Celestial" expounding *inter alia* with wonderful vigour and vivacity the philosophy of *Nishkama Karma* or "Categorical Imperative" to his valiant and never-failing archer, Arjuna.[2] From her bosom sprang up more than 25 centuries ago the founder of Buddhism, the great Lord Buddha,[3] whose

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[1] There are many Gitas the Hindu Literature such as Brahma Gita, Iswar Gita, etc., of which the most important is only the Bhagavad Gita, "Song Celestial" and it is, therefore, called "the Gita." It contains the most sacred teachings of Lord Sri Krishna, an incarnation of Vishnu.

In a letter to Nathaniel Smith, the first Governor-General of India, Warren Hastings writes that such writings as the Bhagavad Gita "will survive when the British dominion in India shall have long ceased to exist and when the sources which at once yielded of wealth and power are lost to remembrance."

Welhelm Van Humboldt, a great German writer, praised it as "the profoundest and loftiest thing the world has ever seen."

Such are the encomiums showered upon this gem of gems in the Indian literature and it has been translated into almost all the European languages.

[2] Arjuna is the third son of Pandu and Kunti. He is a favourite disciple of Sri Krishna who used him as a tool to gain the objects of his Avatar (incarnation) viz. annhilation of vice in this world. He was peerless for his valour and skill in archery. He played the most conspicuous part in the great Mahabarata War of which he is the real hero.

[3] Buddha is said to be an incarnation of Vishnu of the Hindu Triad. He is a great Teacher and World Reformer that flourished before the birth of Christ. Born as he was the heir-apparent to a Royal throne, his philosophic turn of mind soon made him hate the insipid conduct of the world, which rests on mere vanity, show and folly and to betake himself to asceticism in his early years. He measured things

infinite compassion for mankind, unremitting research and sterling genius are displayed in his sermon on the Noble Eight-fold path to gain *Nirvana*[1] (salvation) which he preached for the first time at Benares, the Rome of India, on the sacred banks of Mother Ganga. It is she, be it said with pardonable pride, to whom this life for the first time in the spiritual history of humanity and long before the western science came forth as a witness on its side through her incontestable evidence, revealed itself in all its utter nakedness, so that her people, peacefully minded and profoundly religious from time immemorial, have been using all their unbounded energies in the direction of establishing an attitude towards the inner-self or *Antaryami*, "the in-dwelling Ruler." It is on her holy soil that a long scroll of holy men—as numerous as the sands of the sea—has taken root and has for ages down and ages long by their tireless penance,

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not by glittering appearance but by their true inner worth and greatly felt for the multitude that daily fall lamentable victims. In his burning desire to save them, he founded the great religion, Buddhism, the very essence of whose teachings is *Ahimsa Dharma* which, by the way, it may be mentioned, is more honoured in the breach than in the observance by the so-called present day professors of the faith.

[1] Nirvana is nothingness.

selfless devotion and steadfast faith attained the state of *Salokya*,[1] *Samipya*,[2] *Sarupya*,[3] or *Sayujya*.[4] Among these great shining lights of wisdom, whose perennial supply of thought of the highest philosophic conceptions, filtered through by many unknown and unseen paths, has illumined and sanctified many a dark corner of the globe and endowed her sons with powerful wings to soar up to a vision of life and thus added as much to the glory of India as to the thought-world, the greatest that ever saw the light of day in Southern India during the entire period of the last century up to the present time, is, perhaps, that veteran Poet-Saint Sri Chidambaram Ramalinga Swamiji, the author of the monumental work, worthily called the *Tiruarulpa*.[5]

[1] Salokya : in the same world of Him.

[2] Samipya : in the vicinity of Him.

[3] Sarupya : of the same shape with God, i.e., attaining the likeness of God.

[4] Sayujya : intimate union with Him in His Absolute nature as Love.

[5] Tiruarulpa is the title given to the Swamiji's poetical work. Literally, it means 'Beautiful Songs of Grace' (Tiru-beautiful or pleasant, Arul-grace, Pa-verse, *vide* Chapter XII).

CHAPTER II

Sri Chidambaram Ramalinga Swamiji—His birth and parentage—His initiation in the temple of Sri Nataraja at Chidambaram.

MAHATMA Sri Chidambaram Ramalinga Swamiji was born on Sunday the 5th October, 1823, in the village of *Marudur* on the outskirts of Chidambaram in the District of South Arcot.[1] He belonged to an old

[1] The Swamiji was born during Dekshanayana (half-year from summer solstice to winter solstice) at 29¾ Gadigas (about 5-55 P.M.) on Sunday the 21st of Purattasi (5th October) in the cyclic year Subhanu (Kali Era 4925 corresponding to 1823 A. D.) Dwitya Tithi - Suklapaksha (the second day of bright fortnight or period of ascending moon) Nakshetra (asterism) at birth: Chitra (Verginis Spica) fourth quarter. Legna (ascendant or the raising sign of the Zodiac at birth): **Meena** (Pisces), Moon: in the Zodiac sign of **Tula** (Libra).

ASCENDANT		SATURN	JUPITER
	POSITION OF PLANETS IN THE ZODIAC SIGNS AT SWAMIJI'S BIRTH		MARS DRAGON'S TAIL
DRAGON'S HEAD			
		MERCURY MOON	SUN VENUS

typical Hindu *Saivite* [1] family whose members were well known for their piety, learning and unselfishness. There is a mystical accretion sprung up around the origin of his birth, which however, shall not go unnoticed here. It is said that one day, there called at the house of Chinnammayar, the would-be mother of the Swamiji, a great *Yogi* grown weary of hunger. The lady welcoming the holy guest with her wonted reverence, covered him with every form of kindness. Overjoyed at her profuse hospitality, the *Yogi* in return gave her, before departing, a pinch of sacred ashes and blessing her, said " You shall very soon have a son like me born unto you." From that day, symptoms of pregnancy were beginning to appear in her and true to the prediction, she brought forth a baby-son in due course. Such is the halo of sanctity surrounding the nativity of the Swamiji. To proceed further, he was the third and last of the sons of his father Ramayya Pillay, who was both a school-master and accountant of the village.

[1] Saivite is one belonging to the Hindu community confined to South India, that strictly abstain from flesh-eating and hold Siva as the real *Saguna-Brahma*, the head of the Hindu Trinity.

His two brothers, Sabapathy Pillay and Parasurama Pillay, were in those days considered able scholars in Tamil Literature.

His infancy provides an apt illustration of the dictum of Avvayar [1] which finds an equivalent in the words of Wordsworth, viz., "The child is father of the man," for, the saintly character of the Swamiji was foreshadowed even in his infancy. According to the age-old tradition of the family, the parents, during the fifth month of his birth, visited the famous temple of Sri Nataraja [2] at Chidambaram with the baby in their arms. When the usual offerings were being made to the presiding Deity, this child is said to have accosted the idol and burst into a loud laughter. The priest in attendance was naturally taken aback at this strange phenomenon and

[1] Avvayar is a highly renowned Lady-Saint and Poet-Philosopher that flourished in Southern India over 1000 years ago. She was the eldest sister of sage Tiruvalluvar, the author of the sacred "Kural." Several works are attributed to her, of which her collection of Maxims and Morals in pithy yet simple and intelligible lines are worthy of the highest commendation. Her name is a household word in South India.

[2] Nataraja is an extremely interesting image of Siva represented in His beautiful *Tandava* (dance) expressive of his ecstatic joy. This symbolises the *Jothi*—in the centre of the face at the confluence of the eyebrows and the root of the nose—and its soft and tendril-like undulations every time the breath is inhaled or exhaled.



2. Sri Nataraja Symbolizing Jothi.

being struck with the extraordinary nature and the charming feature of the child, exclaimed "Dedicate this child to Sri[1] Nataraja, for, he is born for something great" a spontaneous prophetic outburst which, as revealed in subsequent pages, was fulfilled to the letter.

[1] Sri is a title, remarkable alike for sanctity and reverence.

CHAPTER III

Swamiji's migration to Madras—His infancy under the guardianship of his mother and two brothers—His school-life—His Dhyanam and learning under inspiration.

A MONTH after this occurrence the father, Ramaya Pillay, died. The burden of maintaining the family having thus devolved on the two brothers, they all removed themselves to far-off Madras where they eked out their livelihood by delivering religious lectures and conducting *Kalakshepams* [1] in public.

Child Ramalingam nursed in his brother's house grew out under the watch and ward of his widowed mother until he entered the age of five, when, according to the prevailing custom, he was duly put to school. Here he was marked as being quite out of the common run ; for an infant, as he was then, he was free from the frolics of his age and mighty in his words and deeds and remarkable as much for the swiftness of his intelligence as for the

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[1] Kalakshepams are public lectures or discourses on religious subjects.

transparency of his wisdom. When he was about six years old, an age at which his mother's milk could hardly be said to have had time to get dried on his lips, he selected a room in the upper storey of his house, hung up a mirror on one of its walls, decorated it with profuse flowers, burnt incense and camphor before it, and fixing his gaze steadily upon the mirror, lost himself in *Murugar*[1] *Dhyanam*[2] for a very long time. This he continued until he attained the age of nine when his *Upasana*[3] became complete and he grew ripe in his learning and wisdom without any human influence.

[1] Murugar is a god of devotion, always represented as riding on a peacock.

[2] Dhyanam (looking within) is deep contemplation or the sinking of one's own soul in the depth of one's own consciousness, of course, retired and remote from all worldly affairs.

[3] Upasana is a devout worship of any particular deity to obtain particular boons.

CHAPTER IV

The indisposition of his brother—His attendance at a Kalakshepam—His debut as a genius—The public applause.

ONE DAY Sabapathy Pillai was, owing to indisposition, prevented from attending his usual place of lecture. He therefore asked his brother young Ramalingam, who was barely nine then, to convey the news of his illness to the audience lest they should be disappointed and put to needless inconvenience.

It is in this connection that the outpourings of his genius became visible for the first time; for, he went to the spot with his face shining like the rising sun and explained the portions already dealt with by his brother on the previous day with such a vivid exposition of surpassing beauty that there was a universal burst of applause every now and then in the large assembly of men. It even charmed the distant passersby, so much so, they could not help straining their ears to get a few snatches of the floating

melody of his faultless flute-like voice. Throughout the *Kalakshepam*, he was the most observed of the observers and when it came to an end nothing but grave astonishment and a world of sighs went forth from all the listeners—" ah ! what a gifted and wonderful head ! alas ! that it should have finished so soon ! " and so on and so forth. This achievement, an achievement of which it is difficult to speak but in terms of unstinted admiration, having naturally led Sabapathy to ponder over rather deliberately, he was forced to recognize him as a superhuman being and preferred to leave him to his own choice in the matter of his scholastic career.

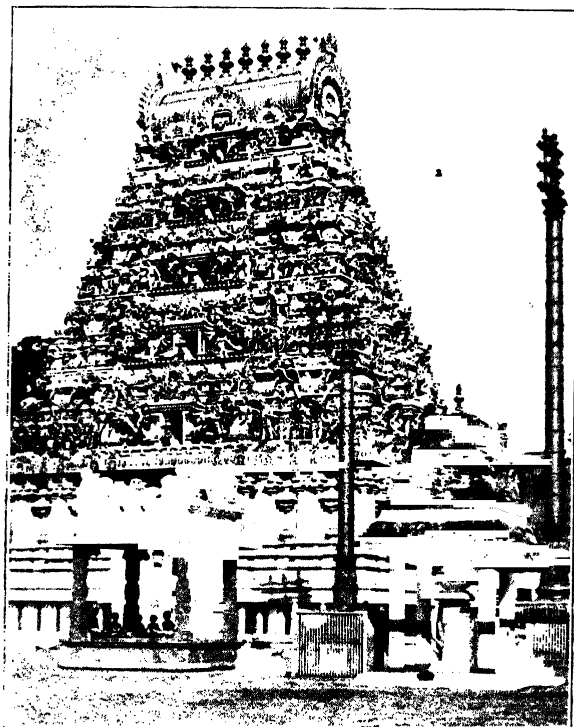
CHAPTER V

His visits to the Temple at Tiruvottiyur—His impromptu padals—His encounter with Pandit Velayudam—His crowning victory as poet-laureate. His tour of pilgrimage—His long stay at Chidambaram.

FROM the 11th year of his age, he became a frequent visitor of the great shrine at Tiruvottiyur, a suburb of Madras and has uttered impromptu hundreds and thousands of *padals* [1] almost all of which are now lost to the world as nobody took the trouble then to preserve them in manuscript. In the course of two or three years his fame spreading far and wide, a large number of *Vidwans* [2] began to flock to him and got enlightenment by his wonderful exposition of their doubts, no matter how knotty or diversified they were.

In those days there was one great Vidwan Toluvur Velayuda Mudaliar. He was a man remarkable for his scholarship both in Tamil and Sanskrit, and had already made his mark

[1] Padals: Stanzas or Verses or Psalms.
[2] Vidwans: very learned men.



3. The Great Temple at Tiruvottiyur.

in the Presidency as a well-seasoned veteran scholar almost without a peer and without a second. With a view to measuring his strength with the Swamiji, he composed 100 superb stanzas calling into play his consummate poetical skill and presented the same to the latter for commentation. The Swamiji glanced over the pages and in an instant pointed out the various imperfections therein in a way that at once convinced him. The Mudaliar Vidwan, whose pride had till then been towering over all like the Colossus of Rhodes, soon blushed in shame and cast his head down which *prima facie* indicated that he cast off his vanity. Whereupon the Swamiji impressed upon him the greatness of humility as the foundation of all virtue ; he then diving deep into his poems brought out several grand and novel ideas which the author until then did not and could not consciously analyse, and furnished him with his brilliant explanations in a manner most pleasing, fascinating and instructive. The Mudaliar lost in wonder and amazement, addressed the Swamiji ; " A great *Gnani !* [1]

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[1] Gnani is one ripe with divine wisdom.

Gibbon says :—" Every man has two educations. One which he receives from others and one, more important, which

Tiru-Arul-Pragasa-Vallal! [1] " and so on and then enthroning him as his *Guru* [2] in his heart of hearts, bound himself as an apprentice under him. In this way Swamiji was spending his days from the age of 15 to 29 either in advancing the interests of *Vidwans* or in supplying lucid *Bhashyams* (philosophic interpretations) for the most difficult poems then in existence.

Not long afterwards he set out on a long tour of pilgrimage and visiting Chingleput,

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he receives from himself." And he, that is advanced in this more important education, is a Gnani or God-intoxicated Sadhu.

[1] Tiru-Arul-Pragasa-Vallal is a donor effulgent with grace. Tiru (beautiful), Arul (grace), Pragasa (brilliant), Vallal (donor).

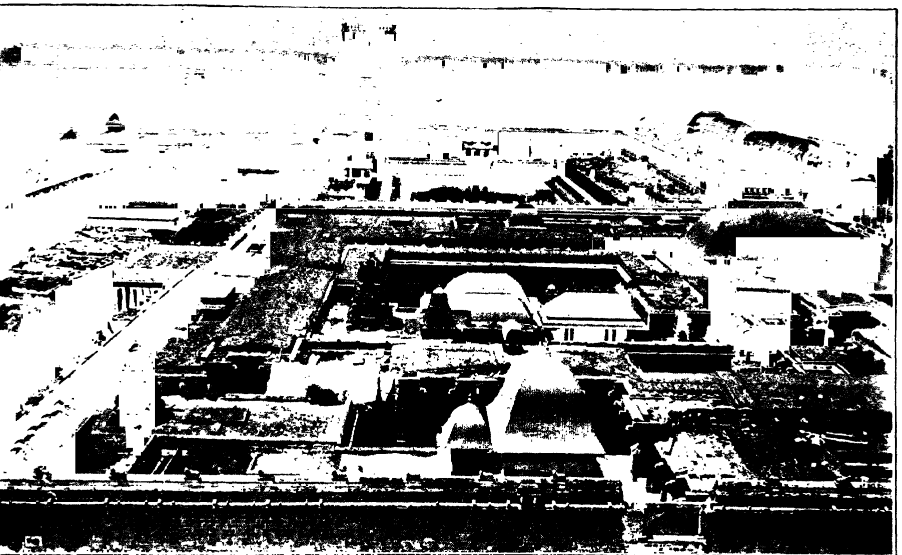
[2] Guru: *Gu*-abysmal darkness, *ru*-one that destroys such darkness. Therefore, it means one that destroys or dispels the darkness i.e. God Almighty.

Second meaning: *Gu*-having no attributes, *ru*-having no hands, feet or other members. Therefore, the word points to the pure absolute Para Brahma or God that has no attributes.

Third meaning: *Gu*-the darkness of A-Gnana (that which is not Gnana or wisdom), *ru*-that which annihilates or dissipates, such darkness. Hence, it means God, the Paranjothi, or the Eternal Light.

Fourth meaning: *Gu*-Maya or illusion, *ru*-Para Brahma or God that destroys the Maya. Hence it means God Almighty that destroys the Maya.

Generally it means a teacher or preceptor. Spiritually conceived it is he that gives that education which is Plato's 'turning of the soul towards the light'; materially conceived it is he that gives that education which is 'Napoleon's open career to talent.' The word Guru is said to be the most important in the 7-crores of Mantras.



4. The Great Chidambaram Temple (Bird's Eye View).

Conjeevaram, Villupuram, Pondicherry and Tirupapuliyur, settled at last for a number of years in Chidambaram (or more correctly Chithambalam " the atmosphere of wisdom " or " the Hall of the Mind ") where the great sage Tirumular [1] attained his *Gnana Samadhi.*[2] Here he was unfailing in his daily visits to Sri Nataraja and his extempore verses, in praise of the great Deity, are many in number.

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[1] Tirumular (Sage) belongs to one of the reputed group of divine saints or the devotees of God Siva. He descended from mount Kailas to pay a short visit to his friend Kurumuni, Agastyar. On his way along the river Kaveri, he passed through the sacred Tiruvavaduturai where he was unexpectedly forced to remain for over 3000 years, and the legendary history attached to his so doing is this:

A shepherd suddenly died of snake-bite while tending his flock in the vicinity of the village. His pet animals, being smitten with deep sorrow burst into tears and began to low most plaintively as they darted around the lifeless body of their master and could not bear to tear themselves away. The heart of the sage, who happened to witness this tragic scene, melted in pity for them. He soon casting his own body off, got into that of the cowherd and comforted the poor dumb creatures.

Curiously enough, the next day the sage could not find his own body. He, however, discerned through his inner eye of knowledge that it was the desire of Siva that he should not leave this earth until he had published a book for the edification of mankind.

Accordingly, he sat under a peepul tree hard by and gave himself up to rigid austerities, in the course of which he completed the work "Tirumular Tirumantram," a veritable store-house of divine wisdom containing 3000 stanzas, improvising one stanza at the end of every year.

Finally the Sage went to Chidambaram and found an abiding place in Him.

[2] Samadhi is a trance caused by the entire or complete absence of the active worldly mind.

CHAPTER VI

His building of Satya Dharmasala—Its inaugural ceremoney—His essay on Ahimsa Dharma – His feeding of the poor—The sacredness of the Dharmasala—The Era celebration.

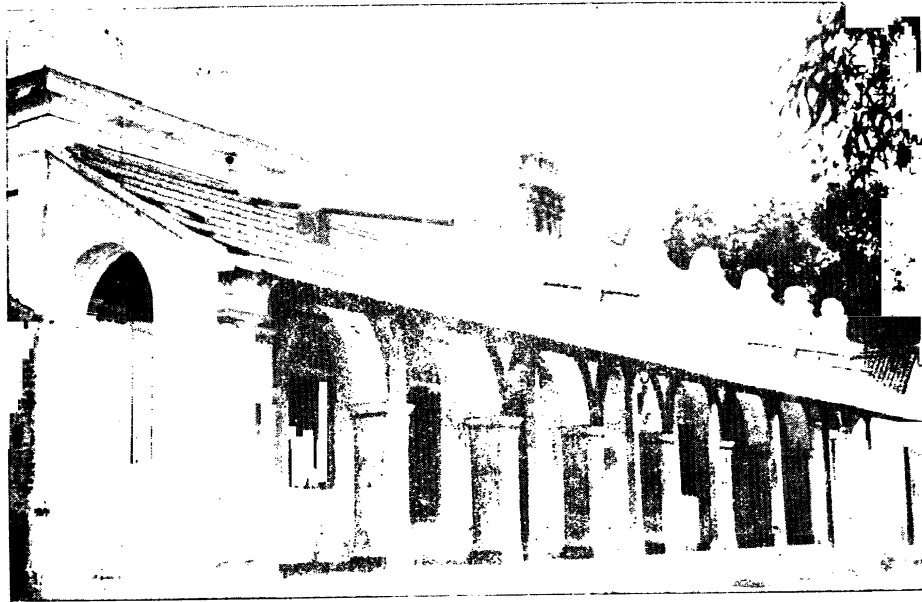
THE Swamiji betook himself to Vadalur (Parvatipuram) a village 20 miles north of Chidambaram. Here he constructed one *Satya* [1] Dharmasala,[2] the site for which was selected by the Swamiji himself. The outstanding peculiarity of it is that it is exactly opposite to the shrine of Sri Nataraja, and to anybody directing his vision thence, are visible the four great *Gopuras* [3] of the shrine; furthermore, it forms, as it were, the gateway of the important pilgrim-centres all round it. It is under the *aegis* of this Dharmasala and within its own precincts the Swamiji had, for

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[1] Satya truth.

[2] Dharmasala is a place of Charity where the poor are given food and shelter free.

[3] Gopuras having resemblance to the Egyptian "propylons," are the enormous gateways which are conspicuous at Hindu Temples at Conjeevaram, Chidambaram, Srirangam etc. They form the chief feature of the architecture of Southern India, mainly intended as fortifications to protect the shrine and have attracted the special attention of foreign travellers.



5. The Satya Dharmasala.

the first time, read out to the public at large, the very first instalment of his most lucid and impressive essay on *Ahimsa Dharma*. But of that later.

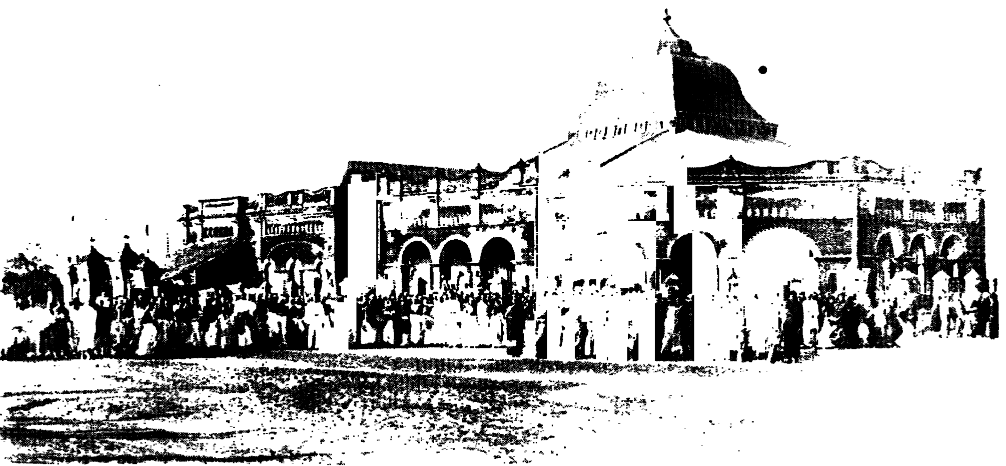
The inauguration ceremony in connection with this building was celebrated with due pomp and solemnity, and no less than 10,000 people were fed on a lavish scale for three consecutive days in honour of the occasion. In accordance with the cherished desire of the Swamiji, even to this day, the Dharmasala is extending its hospitality with unstinted hand to many a weary traveller and indigent old persons and numerous are the sick and the afflicted that get cured of their maladies by making *Pradakshina*[1] (circumambulation) round this Dharmasala.

The foundation of the Dharmasala has been commemorated by an *Era* which is still current in these parts and dates from Thursday the eleventh of *Vaikasi* of the cyclic year *Prabhava*, coinciding with the 23rd of May, 1867. During the past few years a movement

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[1] Pradakshina is the circumambulation of the suppliant round a shrine or some sacred place with his left arm outwards. The right side of the body must be kept turned towards the object of veneration.

having been successfully set on foot to cele-brate this Foundation-Day, a large annual religious gathering takes place here for the purpose and it is greatly increasing in popu-larity.



6. The Satya Gnana Sabha.

CHAPTER VII

His "Temple for Humanity" the Satya Gnana Sabha—Its contents and description—The esoteric meaning of the contents as applicable to the generality of mankind—The sublimity and universality of his example—The horrors of earth-prison—The emptiness of this life—Some spiritual truths in the words of the wise of the West—Thai Pushya fete—Its importance and Dipa Dharsan.

JUST in the neighbourhood of the Dharmasala, the Swamiji acquired an extensive piece of land measuring over 40 *cawnies*[1] and christened it *Uttara*[2] *Gnana Chidambaram.* Here he caused to be reared a Temple for Humanity to which he gave the name *Satya Gnana Sabha.*[3] This *Sabha* which stands on an octagonal masonry cellar-terrace resembling a full-blown lotus flower, is surmounted by a lofty cone-shaped roofing overlaid with thick plates of brass more or less after the

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[1] Cawnies : Singular cawny which is a land measure equal to 1¼ acres.

[2] Uttara : North.

[3] Sabha : a public place of worship.

Gothic fashion and crowned with a gilded *stupi*[1] at the top. It overlooks an aerial frontage secured by ornamental railings and a gateway. The whole structure exhibiting, as it does, the conception and style quite of his own, is of a peculiar and quaint specimen of architectural beauty. It looks much like a chariot when seen at a distance, impresses the mind of the beholder in a manner never to be forgotten and, commands reverence and devotion of him.

Here the Swamiji had got installed a thick English Glass sheet, five feet in height, after duly consecrating the same with his *Pujas*[2] and *Mantras*[3] for over 48 days. Just at the back of this, is planted a luminous

[1] Stoobhi or pinacle is a beautifully carved metal piece having a sharp projection at the top. It is usually made of copper and richly gold-plated. Invariably, it is found fixed up on the summit of every Hindu shrine and takes the place of lightning rod or conductor to protect the building from the ravages of lightning.

[2] Puja is worship in the prescribed manner by the chanting of hymns and recital of prayers accompanied with prescribed ritual.

[3] Mantras are magical spells recommended by Tantras (rules) which, when properly uttered, are supposed to be all-powerful. They are in cryptic or enigmatic language. The singular is Mantra. Man (to contemplate) tra (to protect.) That which protects its followers or votaries.

Dipa,[1] and on the front side are arranged, one behind the other, seven curtains all hanging and in the respective colors of Black, Indigo, Green, Red, Gold or Yellow, White and an Admixture of these six colors.

The Sabha with its contents is, to say the least, as romantic as it is enthralling. Hence the question of questions is, what are these symbols here for? If at all they are intended to convey anything, what is it? The fact is this. The Swamiji has here drawn a close analogy between this edifice and the human body with special reference to the inward mechanism of the head as understood in the white light of human physiology and anatomy and thereby has exhibited to the public eye portraits illustrative of the mysterious forces governing this life, or in other words, he has let clear light shine on the great inner secrets of this life. The Sabha and its scenic arrangements in the interior having thus been deliberately designed and carried out on purposive and well thought-out lines, there is not so much to be seen here with the eye as to

[1]. Dipa is an old fashioned oil lamp (made of burnt clay in this particular instance). It also means the flame consisting of the three zones.

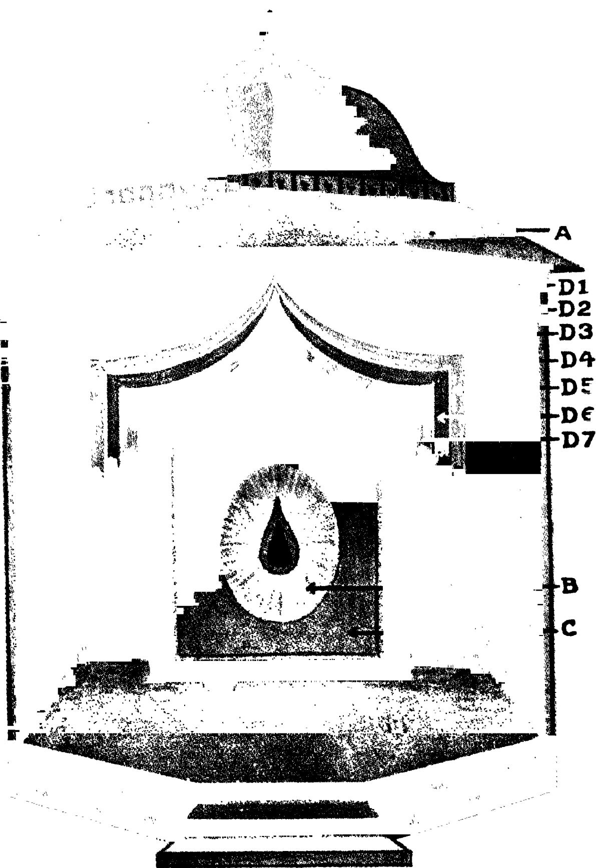
be felt in the spirit ; and to the seeker after truth, who applies his ears to the language of these symbols with a view to feel the greatest ideas they convey and the richest gems of facts they enshrine, will, of course, be abundantly clear the true secret of their meaning. However, despite the intricate and abstruse nature of the subject, which is admittedly a life-study, it shall be explained in a way to the lay reader with the aid of the following diagram in as concise a manner and as simple a language as possible.

A. The lotus-like building is compared to the human body, the Temple of God which is the highest form of His creation and which is but eight spans by one's own hand.

B. The *Dipa* points to the *Jothi*[1] or the All-pervading spirit whose replica it is that is reflected in the microscopic shape of a phosphorescent-like ray on the white transparent tissue mentioned in C below and which is placed just in the centre of the face where the root of the nose and the eyebrows from either side, all meet together.

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[1] Jothi is a dazzling light ; bright white light.



7. The Interior of Satya Gnana Sabha.

For Explanations Please Refer Pages 24-26.

C. The glass represents the pure white transparent tissue forming the *Sanctum Sanctorum* or the seat of the Holy of Holies as pointed out in B above.

D_1. Black curtain stands for the gross elements of waste or dead matter in the body, and its inherent force, *Maha Maya* [1] (Grand Illusion).

D_2. Indigo curtain implies such of the waste or dead matter indicated above, as are in a subtle state of existence in the body. Its inherent force is called *Maya*[2] (Illusion).

D_3. Green curtain denotes water in the body and its inherent force, *Kriya Sakti* [3] (creative power).

D_4. Red curtain signifies the blood in the body and its inherent force, *Para Sakti* [4] (external power).

D_5. Gold coloured or Yellow curtain connotes the bile in the body and its inherent force, *Icha Sakti*[5] (Passions).

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[1] Maha Maya is the envelopment of a thick or dense cloud of illusion.

[2] Maya is envelopment of illusion; Ma—Ya. *Ma*—which is not. *Ya*—that. What is not is Maya.

[3] Kriya (Sakti) is the energy impelling to actions.

[4] Para (Sakti) is the female energy of the primordial Siva or Purusha.

[5] Icha (Sakti) is intense liking for anything.

D_6. White curtain is suggestive of the semen or *Indrium* in the body and its inherent force, *Gnana Sakti*[1] (Wisdom).

D_7. The mixed coloured curtain refers to the combined substance formed by the interpenetration of the six substances just mentioned above, and their peculiar cumulative force called *Audi Sakti*[2] (Primordial force) wherefrom all the other six forces originate and wherein they all merge or end.

Just as the *Dipa* in the lotus-like building is hidden from view until the seven curtains, that hang flat and intercept it, are raised or removed one after another, even so is this Atma or the individual soul in a human being kept out of sight until the rending of the seven veils of Maya that obstruct it. That is to say, one cannot identify oneself with the Highest Bliss until this vile and sinful body is, by successive stages, completely and thoroughly purged of all the spurious elements and their inherent satanic forces.

[1] Gnana (Sakti) is energy leading to the realisation of life and its ultimate goal. Literally the word means the knowledge of God.

[2] Audy (Sakti) is original or primodial (energy).

How rational and universally acceptable is his exposition of the Spiritual Laws in relation to the individual Soul! How graphic and inspiring is his description of the momentous facts of life in terms of its own and very immutable principles! It is something plain, something simple, something practical, yet, something beautiful, elevating and what not! And who is there, be he a prophet or religious teacher, scientist or philosopher, belonging to whatever school or clime, that can, by any stretch of imagination, gainsay these basic principles which represent only that which is common and universal among the various cults and creeds. Surely the Swamiji, the great Master-Teacher who had studied humanity very closely at its best and at its worst and seen the meaning of the diverse lives not with, but through the eye, could not have hit upon a more capital plan than this to enlighten the common people with flashes of "revelation of the hidden life;" for, to put it in the words of Lord Krishna which finds an echo in the voice of Lord Jesus Christ, "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world

and lose his own Soul?" Here wise Solomon's words, "He that ruleth the Empire over himself is greater than he that taketh cities," also come home to us with peculiar force. Verily, serves the Sabha as an eye-opener and sounds in a sort of mute eloquence, much better and far more penetrating than words, written or spoken, the note of warning to the rank and file of every religious belief that having been led away by the 'mirage of this life,' strut and fret their hours upon the World's stage, sunk in the nethermost depths of *Samsara*;[1] that are never pleased to think even for a moment as to what is going to happen to them in the plane of *post-mortem* existence or how this life, which is so much praised, is after all,

"Like drift-wood spars which meet and pass
Upon the boundless Ocean-plain
So on the sea of life, alas!
Man meets man, meets and parts again;"

and that

"Joy comes and goes; hope ebbs and flows
Like the wave
Change doth unknit the tranquil strength of man

[1] Samsara is worldly life or the ordinary life of a *Grihastha* or householder.

Love lends life a little grace,
A few sad smiles and then
Both are laid in one cold place,
In the grave."

These points, silent as they are, are cardinal ones of which the Vedas, Shastras, [1] Gitas, Smritis, [2] Puranas [3] and the ever so many lives of the countless millions of hoary Rishis, [4] Siddhas, [5] Sadhus, [6] Yogis,

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[1] Shastras are sciences containing the essence of Vedas. Tradition ascribes to them the antiquity of centuries while European scholars regard them as comparatively recent (B. C. 600-200).

[2] Smritis are the collection of laws and traditions civil or religious, handed down by legislators of antiquity i.e. the Dharmah Shastras or the Institutes of Manu and other law-givers.

[3] Puranas are the histories of the past comprising the entire body of the Hindu God—Incarnations from the creation.

[4] Rishis are seers, those that have realised the self.

[5] Siddhas are those that have acquired Siddhis or miraculous powers which are (1) Karma Siddhi (2) Yoga Siddhi and (3) Gnana Siddhi. Of these three Siddhis the first, Karma Siddhi, is also called Ashtama Siddhis or eight kinds of powers which are worth mentioning here. They are (1) Anima endowed with which one is capable of making a mountain into an atom, (2) Mahima, endowed with which one is capable of making an atom into a mountain, (3) Garima, endowed with which one can make himself as heavy as possible, (4) Lahima, endowed with which one can make oneself as light as feather; (5) Prapti, endowed with which one is capable of getting anything as one desires; (6) Isatwa, endowed with which one is capable of going anywhere and everywhere, being helped by *Kulika* or *Gnanamani* (bead); (7) Prakamya, endowed with which one is capable of entering into the body of another; (8) Vasitwam endowed with which one is capable of having sway over the seven kinds of creations, such as, Devas, Men, Beasts, etc.

[6] Sadhus are those that have completely conquered the 5 evil qualities which this human flesh is heir to. The 5 qualities

Munis,[1] Saints and Mahatmas,[2] do proclaim to this fickle World in one voice and in the most unmistakable terms. Needless, therefore, to harp on the point that it should be the earnest endeavour of all human beings, however rich or poor, exalted or humble, to thoroughly comprehend the one true purpose of this life, and to fight out, persistently and with an all-conquering will, with the mighty forces of *Stygian* darkness of ignorance enveloping them, liberate the *Jeevatman* [3] or the little skin-bound Self from the endless process of evolution and dissolution, the ever recurring births and deaths which follow one another from eternity to eternity, and ultimately attain *Mukti* or Emancipation—oneness with that Absolute-Real *Paramatman* [4] or the All-Self. Let this ineffable truth

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referred to are (1) Kama—desire or lust, (2) Krodha—anger, (3) Lopa—covetousness, (4) Mada—pride, (5) Matsara, Macharya—envy.

[1] Munis come from '*Mun*'—to think; those who contemplate.

[2] Mahatmas are supermen who by their intense *Yoga Sadhana* have attained a certain mark of distinction in the perfect communion with the Holy of the Holies. They are in touch with the whole Universe in perfect harmony and peace.

[3] Jivatma is the lesser soul or the individual soul.

[4] Paramatman is the Greatest Soul or the Supreme Soul or God.

which is so distant, yet so near, be driven home to the heart of hearts of every one and there remain deeply engraven and indelibly written in characters of gold. In this connection are irresistibly called to our own mind the sublime teachings of some of the great Occidental Thinkers who have expressed themselves in the wisdom of the Orient, assuredly influenced by the Indian philosophical ideas and perhaps, it will not be inappropriate to have a few of them quoted here.

> "The soul is allied to the Divine Being by similarity of nature." —*Socrates.*

> "Man, know thyself
> All wisdom centres there." —*Pope.*

> "Know the Divinity that is within you, that you may know the Divine One of which your Soul is a ray." —*Proclus.*

> "What shadows we are and what shadows we pursue." —*Burke.*

> "By reducing the Soul to abstraction we are one with the Infinite." —*Plotinus.*

> "And I have felt
> A presence that disturbs me with the joy
> Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
> Of something far more deeply interfused,
> Whose dwelling is the light of setting sun,
> And the round ocean, and the living air,
> And the blue sky, and in the mind of man."

(Again in an hour of deep dejection, says)

" The comforter hath found me here.
Upon this lonely road." —*Wordsworth.*

(In dwelling on the mystery which hangs over the origin and destiny of mankind, Teufelsdrockh says.)

" Thus like a God-created fire-breathing spirit-host, we emerge from the Inane; haste stormfully across the astonished Earth; then plunge again into the Inane. Earth's mountains levelled, and her seas filled up in our passage. Can the Earth which is but dead and a vision resist Spirits which have reality and are alive? On the hardest adamant some footprint of us is stamped in; the last rear of the host will read traces of the earliest van. But whence? O Heaven, whither? Sense knows not; Faith knows not; Only that it is through Mystery to Mystery from God to God." —*Carlyle.*

" We are such stuff as dreams are made of;
And our little life is rounded with a sleep."
—*Shakespeare.*

" I will swear that the Soul is divine." —*Cicero.*

" God is the only substance." —*Spinoza.*

" I can hardly understand, how any great imaginative man who has deeply lived, suffered, thought and wrought, can doubt of the Soul's continued progress in the after-life."

" That God which ever lives and loves,
One God, one law, one element,
And one far-off divine event,
To which the whole creation moves."

" Dust are our frames; and gilded dust, our pride
Looks only for a moment whole and sound;
Like that long buried body of the king,

Found lying with his wins and ornaments,
Which at a touch of light, an air of heaven,
Split into ashes, and was found no more."

—*Tennyson.*

" Fool! all that is, at all,
Lasts ever, past recall;
Earth changes, but thy soul and God stand sure;
What entered into thee
That was, is, and shall be;
Time's wheel runs back or stops; Potter and clay endure."

—*Browning.*

" O, Thou, in that mysterious shrine
Enthroned, as I must say, divine;
I will not frame one thought of what
Thou mayst either be or not.
I will not prate of "thus" and "so"
And be profane with "yes" or "no"
Enough that in our soul and heart
Thou whatso'er thou mayst be art."

—*Arthur Hugh Clough.*

" Life is real! Life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal;
Dust thou art, to dust returnest,
Was not spoken of the soul.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,
Is our destined end or way;
But to act, that each tomorrow
Find us farther than today.

Trust no future, howe'er pleasant!
Let the dead past bury its dead!
Act, act in the living present;
Heart within and God o'erhead!

—*Henry W. Longfellow.*

" Use all your hidden forces, Do not miss
The purpose of this life, and do not wait

For circumstances to mould or change your fate
In your own self lies Destiny. Let this
Vast truth cast out all fears, all prejudices,
All hesitation. Know that you are great,
Great with divinity. So dominate
Environment and enter into bliss
Love largely and hate nothing. Hold no aim
That does not chord with universal good
Hear what the voice of silence says,
All joys are yours, if you put forth your claim.
Once let the Spiritual Laws be understood,
Material things must answer and obey"

—*Ella Wheeler Wilcox.*

Now to return to the theme; the *Gnana Sabha* has, of late, come to occupy a very large place in the Indian devout mind particularly of Southern India where Swamiji has been, by his solid worth and selfless work, the cynosure of all eyes. Once a year in the *Thai* [1] *Pushya* [2] *Nakshetra* [3] of *Uttarayana* when the sun is between the Autumn and Spring Equinoxes and the Moon is dazzling with her extreme brilliance in the

[1] That is the name of an important Tamil month, which generally falls in the latter half of January and the first half of February. It forms the very first month of *Uttarayana* a time at which the sun crosses the Equator in the North and dazzles with considerable brilliance. It is said to be the dawn of day for Devas (Angels).

[2] Pushya is one of the Asterisms in the Zodiacal sign Cancer.

[3] Nakshetra is Asterism. Asterisms are 27 in number each of which is divided into 4 quarters and such quarter is called Nakshetra Pada or a Stellar-quarter.

constellation of the *Crab*[1], a grand fete is held with characteristic ceremonies. It is thronged by immense feeding crowds of pilgrims from all parts of Southern India. All the inns of which there are a good number in the place, including the Swamiji's Dharmasala hard by, are packed to their utmost limits, so much so, that special *pandals*[2] are requisitioned to meet the growing needs of the occasion. All the plains are studded with streets of small shops constructed of bamboos and cocoanut leaves. The little village and its low lying pasture-lands look gay with arches, *mandapas*, buntings, festoons and ever-greens while the whole atmosphere is filled with jingling music, selections of hymns and cosmic songs from Tiru-Arulpa amidst great clashing of cymbals and rhythmical hand-clapping by spectators. As a striking feature of the ceremonial *Anna Dana* (gratuitous distribution of food) is in remarkable

[1] Crab or Cancer is one of the 12 signs of the Zodiac known in the Science of Astrology as *Rasi-mandalam*. Brahma is said to have created the Zodiac and divided the same into 12 equal parts under 12 distinct signs. The signs are not bodies, but spaces of 30 degrees each and the Zodiac itself is the apparent trace or belt containing 360 degrees traversed by the Sun, the Moon and all the planets in their passage round the Earth.

[2] Temporary sheds.

evidence everywhere throughout the festivity which lasts for over three consecutive days. People of all castes and nationalities, the rich and the poor alike, are freely entertained with rich dishes. *Dharsan* [1] of the *Dipa*, on this occasion is fraught with blessings, both temporal and spiritual.

[1] Dharsan is sight or view.

CHAPTER VIII

Examples of his Miracles—His subjugation of water—His subjugation of fire—His remaining water-proof—His feeding a large number of guests with an incredibly small quantity of food—His turning mercury into a bead—His burning of water as lamp-oil — The dismemberment of his body and its reunion —His annihilation of distance—His Pranava body, walking on prickly pear, picking of live-charcoal and demonstrations in Alchemy.

THE Swamiji, during his days, wrought innumerable miracles and it will be well here to have some of them briefly noticed.

On a terrible hot day in April a large number of people who had assembled at the Dharmasala were saying with consternation, "Oh ! What an awful drought is this ! How scarce is water now-a-days ! Alas, that it should please Heaven to see us His own creatures actually sun-burnt !" and so on. The Swamiji, who overheard this clamouring, felt pity for them and ordered a vessel of water to be poured over his feet; shortly afterwards

there came a heavy down-pour of rain and all the roads and fields were quickly flooded.

In that part of Cuddalore, N.T., known as Pudupetta, a house caught fire and fortunately for its owner the Swamiji, who happened to be then present in the opposite house, gently waved his cloth as if to order the fire to subside and it did die down instantly.

One day the Swamiji was passing along a road followed by a great concourse of people, when, all of a sudden, rain dropped in pelting showers. The whole body of men were completely drenched, but lo ! not a single drop could be seen on the Swamiji although he was one among them.

Meals were prepared in the Dharmasala one day for a limited number of persons. When they were about to be served, there arrived some 100 additional guests which threw the steward into a terrible fix. At this juncture, the Swamiji, becoming aware of the awkwardness of the situation, repaired to the spot and served the meals with his own hand to the entire body of men ; nevertheless the quantity of food originally prepared did not show any decrease.

Once a magician called on the Swamiji and asked in a fit of churlish humour, if it should not be in the power of a *Siddha* to turn *mercury* into *beads* [1] resplendent with supernatural potentialities. Hearing this the Swamiji gently poured into the hollow of his palm a little mercury and after keeping the same closed for a while, dropped it on the floor as a *Mercury Bead*. Astonished at this, the magician adored the Swamiji for his omnipotence and slunk away crest-fallen.

On another occasion the Swamiji went to Karunguly and stayed there as the guest of one Venkata Reddiar for a considerable time. Here he was in the habit of spending away the nights in reading, and writing out, verses. For this purpose, the mistress of the house, who was most piously disposed, used to keep in his room every day a naked lamp and an earthen vessel filled with sufficient lamp-oil to last for a night. One day this lady, in her

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[1] It is in the power of great Yogis to render a quantity of mercury into a solid *bead*, possessing extraordinary properties. This bead is proof against the action of fire; arrows and bullets, however swiftly and violently sent, will be quite powerless against a man who holds it in his mouth; and the mere touch of it will be enough to turn a lump of copper into glittering gold.

hurry and confusion, to attend a ceremony in the house of a relation of hers, failed to provide the Swamiji with the mud vessel filled with oil but left in its stead, of course through mere inadvertence, not through any sinister motive, a brand new mud vessel filled with water to render it fit for future use. The Swamiji who was absorbed in his work that night as usual, without examining the contents of this new mud vessel, was making use of it to keep the light burning throughout that night without experiencing the least hindrance to his studies. The next morning the lady of the house returned and noticing his miracle, was struck with the greatness of the Swamiji. To this incident the Swamiji has drawn pointed attention in one of his poems and called this light as " The Eternal Light."

One day about noon, the Swamiji went out of the Dharmasala and did not turn up for an unusually long time. On, Vellore Shanmugam Pillay, growing impatient of the Swamiji's absence, went out in search of him and was shocked at the gruesome sight of his body dismembered and cast scattered in an

out-of-the-way locality. The Swamiji immediately put in his appearance before him and warned him not to disturb him any more like that in future.

On another occasion the Swamiji and a number of his followers started for the temple at Tiruvottiyur; a place six miles from Madras. They had scarcely reached half way, when all of a sudden it began to rain heavily and incessantly; and the people getting lawfully terrified, ran pell-mell in all directions in the wilderness. The Swamiji who saw them in this sad plight, rallied them all together, darted through some mysterious bye-lane quick as lightning and ere the twinkling of an eye, got the entire body right in front of the temple.

The Swamiji having been photographed on many an occasion and despite the skill and ingenuity known to the art, not the slightest trace of his body, face, hands or feet, could be made to appear on the negative plate, save his bare loin cloth and the veil; he never cast his shadows behind, nor did he ever leave the faintest mark of his foot-prints while walking. He would tread upon prickly pear and pass

through hard tangles of shrubs and bushes with quite as much ease and unconcern as he would on level ground. It was quite a commonplace occurance with him to pick up live-charcoal without the least dread and melt away iron pieces by simply keeping them in his hands for some time; times without number, he demonstrated by actual experience the stern truth of the science of Alchemy, and instances are not wanting in which base metals were transmuted into precious gold by his merely touching or looking at them for a few seconds. These uncommon incidents, affording as they do, an illustration of the saying that "Truth is stranger than fiction," cannote all the same, the true characteristics of the *Pranava* [1] body of a great *Siddha Purusha* [2] like the Swamiji who had attained the highest consummation in life and stood on a pedestal of unapproachable eminence in the great Divine Plane.

Space forbids any further enlarging upon this aspect of his life's history. However,

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[1] Pranava is having the attributes of Agni or Fire, the "Om."

[2] Purusha is man of virtue.

such instances of miracles are recorded only as an indication of the divine nature of the Swamiji. They are only chips from the block.

CHAPTER IX

His retreat to Mettukuppam—His Yoga Sadhana —His parting message and perpetual Dipa— His mysterious disappearance—His Yoga Agni and its importance.

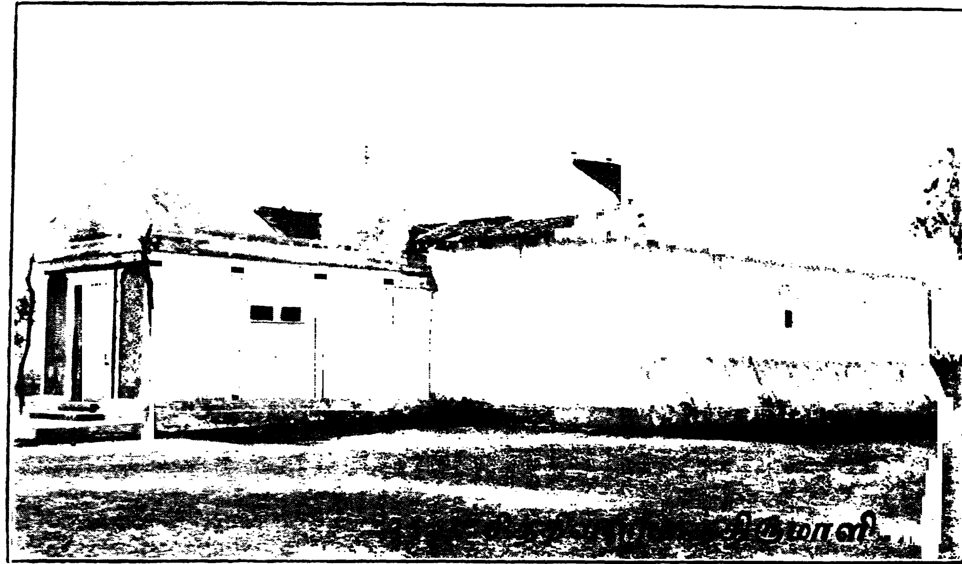
FAR from the madding crowd, a couple of miles beyond Vadalur, there is a little hamlet called Mettukuppam. Here the Swamiji was performing his *Sadhana* [1] in a small thatched hut to which he gave the name *Siddhi Valagam* ever since he laid the foundation stone for the *Gnana Sabha.* From the month of *Margashy* [2] of the Tamil year *Srimuga* [3] he was in the habit of shutting himself up in this hermitage for a few days and then emerging from his self-imposed privacy to engage himself in his usual lecturing campaign. This was going on for some time. At last one day, he suddenly called to him all his disciples and delivered to

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[1] Sadhana is the realisation of life through Yoga-practice.

[2] Margashy is the name of the Tamil month which falls partly in December and partly in January.

[3] Srimuga is the name of a year in the Tamil cycle of years.



8, The Sacrosanct "Siddhivalagam" at Mettukuppam.

them the following, his parting and thrilling message which advocates the development of a substler eye, a subtler ear, and a subtler mental working side by side with the development of a high moral culture through *Ahimsa Dharmah*[1] , and which breaths the spirit of the magnanimous disposition of his heart.

> "O Ye! My disciples! Muster courage, listen and Mark my words. I spread my spiritual mission but it has not taken as deep a root as it should have; however, that be, I say to you this much: If you wish to snap the fetters of the world, if you desire to save yourselves from the infernal twins, sin and death, if you are eager to seek union with that All-feeling Being which is both imperishable and unimpaired, eternal and ever free, steadfastly stick to the sacred and noble doctrine of *Ahimsa*[1] through thick and thin, look upon this *Dipa* as the All-wise Creator and be absorbed in your inward stillness with your entire thoughts fixed and focused on it. Ye shall not see me for a time, although I will be universally present in this World and elsewhere. In your midst there is going to appear shortly one *Arul Pernnjothi Andavar* (one great saviour) when, I will also be here showing many wonders and signs. In case the Authorities insist upon having this Cottage door opened, there is, of course, the Eye of Heaven above to see to it. Adieu."

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[1] Ahimsa is non-violence-towards all the creations of God.

So saying, this prodigy, the very embodiment of Mercy, the great Apostle of Wisdom, got into the solitary hut for the last time when the *Chelas* assembled outside had the door locked and the only opening completely walled up, in due deference to his wishes. Thus ended the visible earthly career of the Swamiji. This event which has no parallel in the annals of spiritualism, ancient or modern, is one of the most wonderful occurrences ; it may truly be called the 'Marvel of the Age,' and is doubtless worthy of the serious attention of all the earnest students of research in the field of Occultism and Spiritualism scattered throughout the world.

This sacred spot of Swamiji is now looming large in the eyes of the pious public and has been marked off by a beautiful cenotaph raised thereon in which the naked oil lamp, that was first lit by the Swamiji during the days of his Yoga Sadhana and referred to in the course of his parting address, is said to be kept perpetually lit even to this day by an inexhaustible store of oil supplied by the Priest of the *Gnana Sabha*. This *Dipa* is now enclosed in a framework of glass and

thus kept protected from the outside gale of winds. In the event of the whole quantity of oil getting used up and the man for the time being in charge unconsciously sleeping away, he is said to be reminded in a dream about his failure in doing, and he suddenly wakes up and immediately does the needful.

At times, in the dead of night, the tiny little flame of the *Dipa* assumes a gigantic shape of unusual brilliancy, so much so, the whole shrine appears to have taken fire, and this *Jothi Dharsan* has been actually witnessed by the simple folk of the village. This *Yoga Agni* is *per se* a proof positive of the stupendous dynamic power in the Swamiji even as it declares the presence of the Swamiji in letters large enough for all to read. And one cannot lay too much stress upon the spiritual importance of a *Dharsan* of this nature, because it is the *Dharsan* of a Mahatma who has attained the state of Beatitude in which he is in perpetual enjoyment of the God-Vision or the God-Consciousness in the depth of his own Soul.

CHAPTER X

The sequal to his disappearance—The police investigation and occurence report—The suspicion of the important officers and their visit to the spot. Their failure to make out a case and return with disappointment—The absence of any mortal remains in the room into which he disappeared.

THIS disappearance of the Swamiji cast a gloom in the village circles, both far and near, and for the time being, overshadowed all other events. The entire rustic population consisting of men, women and children, to whom the Swamiji was a great patriarch and so a tower of strength, nay, all the heaven, were simply feeling like a mother suddenly deprived of her only child. Meantime, Dame Rumour spoke around everywhere and the Police took cognisance of it.

On the receipt of the police occurrence report, the powers that be did suspect foul-play in the mysterious disappearance of the Swamiji. Mr. George Banbury, I.C.S., the then Member of the Board of Revenue and

Mr. J. H. Garstin, I.C.S., the then Collector of South Arcot (afterwards a remarkably distinguished member of the Board of Revenue and a recipient of great honours from the Government) with the usual retinue hastened to the scene of occurrence and launched an elaborate enquiry. This piece of news, which was another thunderbolt, only greatly added to the wailings of the people in the neighbourhood, who unable to express or suppress their painful feelings collected in large numbers on the spot with their hearts full of tumultuous throbbing as they were awaiting the final result. The two officers, both of them Europeans, got down from their horses, came round and round the hut into which the Swamiji had vanished and finding nothing to lend the least support for any sort of suspicion, were compelled to face the conclusion that he must be a 'Great Soul' every inch of Him.

Thereupon it came to pass that the two officers made their way back to the administrative headquarters contributing on the spot about Rs. 20 for a feast in honour of the Swamiji. Lo! the mountain in labour had not produced even the proverbial mouse and

thus there was after all only much ado about nothing. A few years after this event, the door was unlocked when there was no vestige of the Swamiji to be seen inside. And the place was quite void and empty. Some persons, out of malice, indulged in all manner of acrimonious invectives against the Swamiji and gave currency to all sorts of cock and bull stories about his disappearance but they all subsequently died after suffering indescribable miseries.

CHAPTER XI

His faith—The complete absence of any invidious distinction in it—Ekatwam—The story of the blind men and elephant—The oneness of God and the universality of religions—His mission to reform this world and to gain Mukti for her peoples—Ahimsa Dharma—His condemnation of flesh-eating, animal sacrifices and meaningless hollow differences—His Gnana Sabha as a symbol of Universal Brotherhood—Cosmopolitanism of his order—The vastness and greatness of Divine love—Its indispensability for mankind to gain Salvation.

> " For forms of faith let graceless zealots fight
> He cannot be wrong whose soul is in the right." —*Pope*.

How Strange, yet true it is that the idea conveyed in the above golden words forms the Grand Truth, which the Swamiji has enunciated in his wisdom. It is echoed and re-echoed in many a place in his work of which the following may be rendered as framentary instances :—

> "Understood I that there is no religion that hath not drawn for its foundation the Light of Thine Grace in quite an equal measure;

accordingly, I do look upon all religions just the same. Is n't it so? (O! Thou Lord!)."

"I completely abandoned the bigoted controversies of Cast and Creed; then only did I see the Light of Grace shine within me in all its effulgence."

"To whomsoever in whatsoever world it may be, the *Arul Perunjothi* (the Eternal Light) is the one and the only God. Not comprehending this Truth, religious bigots are simply prating like those stone-blind in the *story of the blind men and the elephant.* They are ignoramuses that have not traced out the fountain-head of the Eternal Wisdom. You talked of a haze of hëresays of miserable distortions amongst the senseless; I did see the Divine Dance, drink the true honey of Divine Ambrosia known as *Gnanam* and got admission into the splendid society of *Sanmarga* (the school of wisdom) when, there fell from my eyes, as it had been, scales. And I did realise that even those words of seeming falsity were not without a particle of truth in them."

Deliberate am I in my conclusion that the heart of the man that doth feel all living beings quite in terms of his own with a mentality reflected all without refraction, and as his bounden duty, is the spot wherein my Lord immoculate danceth in His ecstatic joy in His miniature form. At the feet of such a Gnani my heart is well inclined to serve."

Waver not, budge not an inch even, think not of any one else, believe not this phantasmal world and grow not weary at heart; look

sharp and get into the Society of Sanmarga. Henceforth all the Creeds shall become cemented together into one only."

The under-current of Truth perceived in the above lines deserves to be pondered over and followed with unfailing assiduity. Dogmas and Creeds are like will-o'-the-wisps, slippery ones, and what is called 'religion,' is nothing but a huge humbug, a colossal system of self-deception induced by a confusing tangle of various beliefs. They all do sink or swim or change and pass but the Faith or rather the foundational Truth forming the basis of such Dogmas and Creeds is there still quite unimpaired because, it cannot be impugned or assailed; it is far too deep to be shaken by any fate. For example, when quoting Pope here, of course, are brushed aside his Church and Creed and all that is recognized in him is a seer whose words shine as a beacon-light on the path of life. Why is this so? This is because Truth needs must remain the same all the world over and herein lies that "Clearness of Vision" which, in the words of Emerson, "can we attain not by literature or theology but only by rare ntegrity."

Milton also says—

"God doth prefer
Before all temples, the upright heart and pure."

Such indeed is the greatness of all the great Prophets, Seers, Saints, Sages, and Saviours the perfected flowers of humanity and the Swamiji is certainly one of them.

Though born of orthodox parents, it is remarkable that he stood stripped of all religious prejudices. Having a vision, penetrating as lightning, he saw *Ekatwam*[1] (oneness) in all the manifold aspects of the World, from the dead matter upwards. That is to say, he felt the All-feeling Being present everywhere much in the same way in which oil is found pervading in the body of a gingili seed, fragrance in flowers, ghee in milk, water in the earth and life in the body. To be precise,

[1] Ekatwam : Unity with God or at-one-with God.
Here compare the memorable lines of the great poet Lord Byron—

"There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
There is a rapture on the lonely shore;
There is society, where none intrudes,
By the deep sea, and music in its roar;
I love not man the less, but nature more,
From these our interviews in which I steal
From all I may be, or have been before,
To mingle with the universe, and feel
What I can n'er express, yet cannot all conceal."

he followed the Almighty's Eternal Laws on which is built up Eternal Dharma. In this connection the *story of the blind men and the elephant* is a standing illustration.

Some men all stone-blind, out of curiosity, went out one day to see what an elephant is like, by mere observation. The first man approached the animal and happened to fall against its broad and sturdy side when he exclaimed that the animal was like a wall. The second touched its smooth and sharp tusk and cried out that the animal was like a spear. The third felt along the proboscis and bawled out that the animal was like a rice-pounding pestle. The fourth stretched out his eager hand and felt its leg when he affirmed that the animal was like a stone-mortar. The fifth chanced to take hold of its ear and said emphatically that the animal was like a winnowing basket. The sixth seized on the surging tail that fell into his hands and shouted at the top of his voice that the animal was like a rope and so on and so forth.

The opinions having become sharply divided thus, they all fell out among themselves. Here the truth is this : though each

was partly right, they all were wrong or it will be rather nearer the truth to say that they were both right and wrong. The elephant is not like a wall, or a spear, or a rice-pounding pestle, or a stone-mortar, or a winnowing basket, or a rope but only its side, proboscis, tusk, leg, ear, and tail respectively. It is an intellectual error on the part of the blind, that they were led away to entertain such queer and absurd notions due entirely to their wanting in eye-sight, and nothing else. If, by the Grace of the All-Wise Creator, they all happen to receive sight and see the animal before them, then they would have certainly realised what it was really like and how their respective descriptions of it represented only parts of the truth ; even so is the case of the diverse religious wranglers. And

> " What is in a name, that which we call a rose
> By any other name would smell as sweet."

Therefore, God is God always under all conditions and circumstances and what matters it if He is called Brahma, Vishnu, Siva, Allah, Jehovah, Christ etc., etc. These all are but mere names pointing to the one and the only God, the abiding abode of the

Eternal *Dharma*—a conception of the most unique character according to Hindu Philosophy. Surely He cannot be anything less than Himself if He is looked at, or tried to be apprehended, guided by the Light derived by us looking at Him from whatever angle of vision. And this is the truth of commendable cosmopolitan grandeur, a grandeur, unsullied by senseless bigotory or rabid orthodoxy, that will be brought home to any thoughtful reader that penetrates into His teachings and preachings individually or in the aggregate. And it may not seem wholly unfit to quote here yet another stanza from *Arulpa* which runs thus :—

> "O! Ye People! Deliberately understand that there is only one God ; He is with form and without form or with both. There is no rhyme or reason in the theory that He exists in 2's and 3's or as *Shaktis* or *Umas*. What! Can there be two or more lives in one and the same body ?"

To come to his mission, says the Swamiji :—

> "I have been purposely sent out to this World charged with His *Arul* and Divine Ordinance ; in due obedience to His High Behest, I am to reform the entire mass of the people of the Earth who are rotten to the very core of their being yet pose themselves as souls of

honour; furthermore, I am to gain for them admittance into the Order of *Sanmarga* so that, they may also obtain *Mukti* (deliverance from transmigration).

"I abhorred the sight of those who are reeking with the smell of bad *Karma* and who are addicted to the wicked habits of flesh-eating; shocked and shuddered at the very depth of my heart, I pined away with my entire frame of bones charred as they were. And of this revolt at heart, O! Thou Lord! Thou art quite in the know."

Yogi Murga Doss a contemporary celebrity of the Swamiji, has written in his Eulogy on the latter thus :—

"Vaduluran[1] is *Ahimsa* incarnate."

"So very soft is the heart of *Vaduluran* that it is enough to draw forth tears in streams from his eyes even should a trifling moth of the size of pepper perish in the flame of a lamp."

These lines place in the forefront the very head and front of the Swamiji's *Avatar*, his nature and his ruling passion to serve mankind.

To be more to the point, his teaching plainly put, will come to this: The purpose of this life is to save the atrophy of the Soul or to attain *Mukti*, as it may otherwise be

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[1] Vaduluran is the Swamiji.

called, before it is too late, for the days of life are numbered.

> "And our hearts though stout and brave,
> Still, like muffled drums, are beating,
> Funeral marches to the grave"

which clearly shows that the cruel end is terribly near. To gain *Mukti* (absolution) the fundamental is His Grace, which is unattainable through any means other than *Ahimsa Dharma*. *Arul* is the Grace of the Almighty or the God-Vision. *Ahimsa* is the Grace of the Soul or the Soul-Vision. Necessarily therefore, one must possess grace to attract His Grace. He must realise his own Soul-Vision first, before he could realise the Over-Soul-Vision or the God-Vision. *Ahimsa,* forming as it does, the one and the only way to win His Grace is also called the *Sanmarga,* the right path or the road to wisdom; it is *Mukti* or liberation. Conversely, *Himsa,* forming as it does, the one straight way to Hell, is also called the *Durmarga* or the road to self-destruction; it is the evil path. Wherever there is *Ahimsa,* there enters the Light of Knowledge wherein blossoms the holy, serene and ethereal thing, Love having that most delightful aroma Virtue, about it. It is

this Love in which the Soul sustains itself even as the body subsists in the air. And it is here that God lives, moves and has His Being. Conversely, wherever there is *Himsa* there enters the darkness of ignorance wherein take root all thoughts of profane and ignoble Vice which manifest themselves in diabolical evil deeds that hinder or impede the action of the noble will ; it is the hotbed of anarchy, chaos and ruin. Therefore Virtue is *Ahimsa* and Sin is *Himsa*. The Light that issues forth from *Ahimsa* is the Eternal Light leading into the strange unearthly splendour of Eternal Joy. And those that are, at all times, in season and out of season, holding communion with this Light of lights and sharing in this Joy of joys, are known as *Jivan Muktas* or God-Men, men who can Create, Cherish or Destroy as they list.

Now it goes without saying that *Ahimsa* is the key to *Mukti* and there should be therefore, no mistake in understanding the true significance of its meaning. Here *Ahimsa* has been used in its widest sense. It stands for what may rightly be called humanitarian ideal. It means not merely abstention from

injury to others but also actively doing good to, and uplifting, the low, the weak, the decrepit, the infirm, the old, the oppressed, the depressed, the suppressed, the out-caste, the needy, the down-trodden, the sinful, the fallen, the despised and the like. *Ahimsa* is Universal Love or Love Divine which is co-extensive with God and so Eternal. It scarcely needs saying, therefore, that God minus Divine Love is equal to something, nothing or naught, just as a flame will be non-existing when its essential quality heat is removed or withdrawn from it.

Having thus grappled with this essential particular, the Gospel, which he preached, is one of pure Love and Good-will to all creatures. He chalked out a common path to humanity by promulgating the doctrine of Ahimsa Dharma. To put it in the words of Mahatma Gandhi "man's supremacy over lower animals meant not that the former should prey upon the latter, but the higher should protect the lower, or, that there should be mutual aid between the two as between man and man." He condemned flesh-eating and directed the attention of the people to

the sterling truth that, in the offering of animal sacrifices, they would only be guilty of a sin of which they could hardly purge themselves by any kind of expiation. Far from bringing the doers the nearer to the millennium, it would, on the other hand, merely widen the gulf between them and God and tend to place them immeasurably beyond His reech. He called on frail humanity to assimilate the living force and the truth of his principle of *Ahimsa*, in all its forms as their highest *summum bonum* and to stand fast by it, day in and day out, as it is the only sure means of "sailing over life's troubled main," and avoiding the shipwreck of their lives. Obviously his aim was to create a sort of *entente cordiale* among all peoples and thus to bring about Unity rather than Diversity through moral discipline (*Sanmarga*). He wanted to weld the people into one mighty whole family, Humanity, held together by no other tie than the tie called *Sanmarga*. And what is Divine science after all? The ultimate truth which science, the divine science, is really in search of says Edward Carpenter, "is a moral truth on understanding of what man is, and the

discovery of the true relation of each other" and "if a man love not his brother whom he hath seen, how shall he love God whom he hath not seen." To this laudable end did he work and try to bring every man nearer unto his brother man by annihilating every unreasonable or meaningless hollow difference between them. What a splendid idea of a noble soul ! For, "one touch of nature makes the whole world kin" indeed ; the key-note of this, his main principle, is struck in Chapter VII dealing with *Gnana Sabha* of which enough has already been said in graphic details, and which finds mention here only because it bears upon the fact that it contributes towards the growth of a healthy spirit of spiritual Brotherhood among the people as a whole, calculated to level up diverse inequalities and bewildering complexities and distorting conventionalities in the ordinary modes of life.*

* Every religion stands for "The Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man". Lord Christ says, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Mahammad the Prophet says, "The creation is of God's family, for its sustenance is from Him. Therefore the most beloved unto God is the person who does good to God's family." Similar parallels are not wanting in the sacred works of other religions. In fact, if the tenets of any religion are closely and carefully examined in their pristine

His is unquestionably a World-movement towards World-unity and World-peace with the matchless vision of a new Order which may rightly be called the "Republic of Conscience." Everyone irrespective of the barriers of caste, creed, colour, status, religion or nationality, who abstain from flesh-eating and is otherwise of good sound ethical principles, is quite welcome to enter his fold. *Touch-me-not-ism* he was certainly not affected by, and Panchamas [1] were included in the army of his followers. Pertinently to the present state of things, a state in which the whole air of India from the Himalayas to the grassy plains of the Cape Comorin, is vibrant with the loud and incessant wailings of over Seventy millions of our down-trodden races, better known as the *untouchables*, not to say anything of the ghastly accounts of guerilla warfare between the great communities under the cloak of religion, this point needs to be emphasised here, more than ever before, in

purity, it will doubtless be disclosed that the groundwork is the same although, in later years, it has become more or less overlaid with accretions or incrustations giving rise to cleavages even within the fold of every religion.

[1] Panchamas are those who are below the four castes, now called the Depressed Classes.

as much as it may serve to open the eyes of our countrymen who barefacedly still cling to the world-detested and ill-fated 'pride of caste' which forming, so to speak, the seed-bed of destruction, is fast eating into the vitals of Hinduism and threatening to wipe out its very existence. Thus the Gospel which the Swamiji preached is the Gospel of Transcendental Love, a word too deep for words. As one English author rightly observes in his work, it has a language of its own, needing no words or symbols: its grammar is intuition; its speech the emotions; its transmitter the eyes; and in whose praise our Kannappa Nayanar [1] and other millions of *Bhaktas* like him, have in their ecstatic fits, poured forth

[1] Kannappanayanar: He was the son of a hunter-chieftain inhabiting the hills of Kalahastry, a station on the Madras and Southern Maharatta Railway and a Zamindary town on the right bank of the river Suvarnamukhi. He was very devoted to God. One day, when he had been on his usual visits to the local temple, he happened to notice blood streaming down from the eyes of the presiding Deity, known as 'Kalahasty Nather.' Shocked and shuddering at this ghastly sight, he immediately sobbed and fainted away in the most agonizing pain; soon afterwards, he took courage with both the hands and with frantic efforts he removed his very eyes from their sockets and when he was about to plant them into those of the Deity, God, in His overflowing admiration for his immaculate love, embraced him and blessed him with His Grace. Such is the great love of Kannappar that he ever afterwards came to be considered as the most

songs filled with rhythm of eternal flux and reflux.

In addressing God says the Swamiji :—

"Mountain-like as Thou art, Thou art in the hand-grip called LOVE.

Treasure-like as Thou art, Thou art caught in the net called LOVE.

Ambrosia-like as Thou art, Thou art in the hollow of the palm called LOVE.

Ocean-like as Thou art, Thou abideth in the vessel called LOVE.

Thou art LOVE that illumines life and understanding.

Thou art LOVE the all-luminous that abideth even in a small atom.

Thou art the great *Siva* whose form is LOVE."

In speaking of kindness which is but a stepping-stone to Love says Bovee :—

"Kindness is the language the dumb can speak and the deaf can understand."

One Poet says :—

"Joy is LOVE exalted,
Peace is LOVE in repose,
Long suffering is LOVE enduring,
Gentleness in LOVE in society,
Faith is LOVE in the battle-field,
Meekness is LOVE in school, and
Temperance is LOVE in training."

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devoted of the *Siva-Bhaktas* and that his name became synanymous with "Love."

St. Francis of Sales says :—

> "Love is stronger than death."

It is this Love which prompted Cowper to write his most immortal lines, *On the Receipt of My Mother's Picture.* And indeed it is the noblest of all his works.

Ruskins says :—

> "All true science begins in the Love, not the dissection of your fellow-creatures; and it ends in the Love, not the analysis of God."

Victor Hugo says :—

> "Life is the flower of which Love is the honey."

Ruby Ellis says :—

> "LOVE is as boundless as the ocean, as wide as the universe, and as imperishable as the granite rock. Absence inflames it, weakness fans it, trial strengthens it, sacrifice ennobles it and religion sanctifies it."

It is this Love which, in the words of our venerable Maha Rishi Rabindranath Tagore, is "the law of life, the road to freedom and the pathway to God."

To put it in a nutshell :

> "LOVE is GOD
> And makes Heaven."

CHAPTER XII

Tiru-Arulpa—Its masterly composition and exquisite beauty—Its analogy to Tiruvachagam—Its edifying influence—The immensity of the work.

HIS Tiru Arulpa is no doubt a masterpiece in Tamil Literature. The stanzas are myriads in number, mostly *Vedantic*[1] and therefore intensely thought-packed and weighty in worth, so much so, that one has to get to the very bottom of his verse to get at the priceless pearl therein. They deal with the great issues and diverse phases of human life, its origin, its duties and its ultimate goal besides quite a variety of other Cosmic and Philosopic Truths which cannot fail to inspire, guide and raise all those who hanker after Supreme Wisdom and Spiritual Bliss.

In point of strength, elegance of expression and chaste poetic diction, melodious

1 Vedantic derived from Vedanta is a word which literally means the "end of knowledge" i.e. Wisdom. This is nothing but the Hindu Philosophy or rather the science of the Soul which tells us how to realise the Eternal Truth of the Universe and to become one therewith.

and mellifluous composition, intense mystic beauty, distinguishing excellence in the rich display of unusual imagery and profundity of thought, lofty and noble ideals, able and erudite exposition of the greatest Truths and hidden Mysteries, such as the nature and attributes of God, the nature and attribute of Soul, the symphony of human life with the Divine Life, the many travails of intellectual and moral puzzles which every Soul has got to pass through, before finally merging in the Eternal Lover etc., etc., and last, if not the least, the surging earnestness and all-absorbing love and affection of this veteran saintly author, these hymns may almost be said to be the mere poetic translation of the great *Tiruvachagam* [1] of Sri Manickavachaga Swamiji of

[1] Tiruvachagam : This is the title of the book containing the beautiful utterances of the great saint Sri Manickavachagar of the reputed Saintly Four. Literally it means this : 'Tiru' means pleasure (சுகம்) i.e. the pleasure engendered by the union of the bride and bridegroom or the husband and the wife in love. The pleasure meant here is that Eternal Bliss due to the union of the man-Soul with the God-Soul and this is Mukti or Emancipation. 'Vachagam' means the readings. Therefore the whole word means Readings that bring in one's union with God. There is decidedly no other work in the whole Tamil language more deserving of that august distinction. It is after the model of Upanishads in the Vedas and its fame has spread even to the far off west, so much so, that no less a scholar than

the world-famous *Saintly Four.*[1] His Philosophy of Spiritualism and Transcedentalism is far and away a superb work worthy of our country's great tradition. His verses, breathing as they do, the noblest and the most pathetic appeals to the Spirit of Liberty, are awe-inspiring, heart-melting and soul-thrilling and when set to music, they simply charge the air with the stateliness and fragrance of the *Tamil Tongue* expressive of the deepest feeling and grandest ideas that strike the innermost chords of human hearts, however hard, callous or soul-dead they may appear; they simply electrify us with the rich vitality and trumpet-voice of their message;

the late Rev. Dr. G. U. Pope has made a masterly translation of it into English during the close of the last century.

[1] Saintly Four: what is meant here is that illustrious group consisting of the four great canonized saints, Manickavachagar, Aludaya Pillay *alias* Tiru Gnana Sambandar, Appar *alias* Tiru Navukkarasu and Sundarar of the most sacred memory, that flourished long ago in Southern India. Of these the first named is the author of Tiruvachagam; the other three have uttered hymns and songs in countless numbers, some pathetic and some rather humorous, the collection of which forms the sacred work known as Devaram or Adangal Murai. To these two works, Devaram and Tiruvachagam, have been assigned considerable sacredness and paramount importance by the Tamilians of Southern India and Ceylon among whom, these works are universally known as the "Tamil Vedas", most probably on account of their close resemblance in being but praises and prayers offered to God.

they are soothing like balm to the wounded mind; they act like a stimulus to the dull and inert spirit; they are exhilarating and illuminating in their influence upon the mental and moral feelings; and above all, they pave the way for the communion of the Man-Soul with the God-Soul,—the be-all and the end-all of this earthly life. No corner of the Tamil-speaking world exists in India into which his work has not penetrated. Such being the sublime beauty of his monumental work, *Tiru Arulpa*, it is no wonder that even those who casually take to reading his stanzas in books, recorded as they are in cold print, do feel the intensity of a desire to read more, much more and yet much more and get more and more engrossed in the genial current of lofty sentiments and shining thoughts of Divine Love and religious exaltation running underneath them.

The poems alone printed in Royal Octavo form take up over 1,000 pages or well neigh 36,000 lines, not to say anything of the many that have either been not traced out yet or lost altogether; and there are hundreds of folios of his pross-work and grammar besides.

To even outline these in the space of a few pages here is, therefore, impossible, still more to outline the high standard of his practical experience in the intangible domain of Metaphysics. Nevertheless, realising fully the importance of the work and lest it should be incompatible with fairness, it has been set to view in the next chapter a few of his stanzas *in extenso* in their original Tamil text with explanatory free English translation and annotation. These gleanings, however imperfect, will not fail, it is hoped, to appeal to the auditory imagination[1] of thoughtful readers and give them at least a fragmentary idea as to the immense wealth contained in the book thus leading to their becoming more widely known and appreciated.

[1] To explain in the words of T. S. Eliot this arresting expression means the feeling for syllable and rhythm, penetrating far below the conscious levels of thought and feeling, invigorating every word ; sinking to the most primitive and forgotten returning to the origin and bringing something ; back, seeking the beginning and the end.

CHAPTER XIII

Rambles in Tiru Arulpa—Preface—The over flowing Love of God as the key to Mukti—On Lord Kandaswami and the great maxims of life—On Sanmarga, the way to Mukti—On His limitless greatness—Praises extoling His greatness—On His magnanimous grace—The intellectual and moral puzzles of a Soul for final liberation—On the great boons conferred by God upon His Bhaktas—Praises offered to Him invoking His aid to reach the life's goal—In His praises—The indeterminate and indeterminable state of His—Praises to Sri Rama for Salvation—In praise of Goddess Tirukkannamangai Thayar—On Sanmarga and its neutralising and would-be unifying influence in the world—Praises invoking His aid for liberation—The characteristics of a Pranava body—Praises on His matchless Durbar Hall of wisdom—What Sadhus are like in this world—The Swamiji's desire and its consummation through His blessings.

TO begin with it must, however, be prefaced by a few words. Clothed as the Stanzas are, in the words of the tamest of Jejune platitudes, the editor is perfectly conscious

that they are teeming with many intertwined and tangled problems of Mysticism with strange undecipherable meanings calling for the highest intellectual dissection and baffling the giants amongst the scholars nay, even philosophers. The Swamiji has drawn a word-picture of beauty, joy and impressions, as seen and felt by him in those unimaginable Divine Realms called 'Universes,' just as a brilliant colourist would do on a canvas; and this could hardly be comprehended, much less interpreted by ordinary mortals who possess a limited intelligence only. The editor is but a poor specimen among them and by no means equal to the great task. However, he has prayerfully dipped deeply enough and long enough on every stanza by having Swamiji in the most sacred chamber of his heart and has otherwise been at considerable pains to get light on the sublime and beautiful thoughts and the complicated ideas that lie imbeded in their depths; consequently, he thinks that he has probably brought them out as far near the mark as possible. But where his poor knowledge has not penetrated and what had not, therefore, come within his

mental grasp, they being mostly of the nature of Spiritual Secrets that can only be learnt through a Spiritual *Guru*, his humble intellect could not have carried him very far here; in this he is only acting the part of a strutting turkey for a fine peacock or a puny cat for a mighty tiger. And it is, therefore, left to the indulgent readers to set right all such defects in the shape of either omissions or commissions, by the lofty thoughts from their worthy brains.

நினைந்துநினைந் துணர்ந்துணர்ந்து நெகிழ்ந்துநெகிழ்ந் தன்பே
நிறைந்துநிறைந் தூற்றெழுங்கண் ணீரதனா லுடம்பு
நனைந்துநனைந் தருளமுதே நன்னிதியே ஞான
நடத்தரசே யென்னுரிமை நாயகனே யென்று
வனைந்துவனைந் தேத்துதுநாம் வம்மினுல கியலீர்
மரணமிலாப் பெருவாழ்வில் வாழ்ந்திடலாங் கண்டீர்
புனைந்துரையேன் பொய்புகலேன் சத்தியஞ்சொல் கின்றேன்
பொற்சபையிற் சிற்சபையிற் புகுந்தருண மிதுவே.

O! People! come unto me and harken to my words. We shall think of Him in season and out of season; feel Him in the depth of our own consciousness; be moved to raptures from excess of emotion (fullness of the divine current of joy) by melting and merging ourselves into the exuberance of joy with body all drenched by the tears rolling down from the eyes as if from a spring; and adore Him by

addressing "O Thou the Ambrosia of Grace !. Thou the excellent Good ! Thou the supreme Dancer of Knowledge! Thou my *de facto* Lord !" over and over again.

Beware, we can then enjoy the eternal life that knows 'no death.' And be assured of it. I'll ne'er tittle-tattle, neither will I indulge in lies. And I speak the veriest truth. Now is the time to enter the Hall of Knowledge.

Intense concentration gives rise to inspiration which is called *Bhakti*; it melts the heart. From intense inspiration arises the blaze of faith. That is to say, when *Bhakti* is carried too too far, as far as the very depth of one's own consciousness, there springs in him a peculiar pleasure, a delirious Joy which is called LOVE; it clings to the Soul, melts the same, and—what is more—also makes the very impress of the All-powerful Creator.

When a man is endued with *Bhakti* he perceives the presence, nay, the very presence, of God in all live-creatures, why, even in inanimate objects. When this *Bhakti* transcends its bounds, it leads him into the province of Grace and the latter in turn at maturity, into that of Love. And this Love, exalted Love, it is that inevitably absorbs him in the perpetual enjoyment of God-consciousness in his own Soul.

In the greetings, "O Thou the Ambrosia of Grace etc.. etc.," are implied the terms of relationship on which an ideal devotee stands to the Almighty. To be succinct, God is bound to show His magnanimity to him by protecting the latter with His ambrosial food, Grace: this is as between a majestic master and

a faithful slave; He is bound to reveal His parental affection to him by providing the latter with His wealth Grace: this is as between a noble father and a worthy son; He is bound to prove His fidelity and constancy to him by helping the latter with His friendliness, Grace: this is as between a bosom friend and a bosom friend just like the proverbial "Damon and Pythias"; He is bound to reciprocate His faithfulness to him by lavishing on the latter His Love, Grace: this is as between a model husband and a devout wife.

Hall of Knowledge: This is a rendering of the Tamil word *Chitsabah*. We may notice in passing that *Chidambaram* is a physical embodiment of *Chit-Akasa* (the Ether of Knowledge) which, according to Hindu Philosophy, is a small place in the heart where the Soul is supposed to reside.

ஒருமையுட னினது திரு மலரடி நினைக்கின்ற
உத்தமர்த முறவு வேண்டும்
உள்ளொன்று வைத்துப் புறம்பொன்று பேசுவார்
உறவுகல வாமை வேண்டும்
பெருமைபெறு நினது புகழ் பேசவேண் டும்பொய்மை
பேசா திருக்க வேண்டும்
பெருநெறி பிடித்தொழுக வேண்டுமத மானபேய்
பிடியா திருக்க வேண்டும்
மருவுபெண் ணாசையை மறக்கவே வேண்டுமுனை
மறவா திருக்க வேண்டும்
மதிவேண்டு நின்கருணை நிதிவேண்டு நோயற்ற
வாழ்வினான் வாழ வேண்டும்
தருமமிகு சென்னையிற் கந்தகோட் டத்துள்வளர்
தலமோங்கு கந்த வேளே
தண்முகத் துய்யமணி யுண்முகச் சைவமணி
சண்முகத் தெய்வ மணியே.

O! Thou, the Lord Kandaswamy of the Kandaswamy Temple at Madras, a city

progressive alike in charity and sanctity! Thou, the Lord Gracious and Spotless! Thou, the immaculate Soul of Souls in-dwelling! Thou Shanmuga (the six-faced), the God of Gods!

One should court the company of the good that focus their thoughts on Thine beautiful Lotus-like feet with single devotion; should shun the society of those whose heart and lip disagree (differ); should extol the greatness of Thine august Self; should desist from uttering falsehood; should walk in the path of Righteousness; should not be possessed of the devil *Madham*; should clean forget the tempting lust of women-folk; should never forget Thee, be endowed with *Mati* and the Wealth of Thy Grace; and enter Eternal Life, free from disease.

This is one of the poems which the Swamiji improvised in his very early days to commemorate his visits to, and in praise of, the presiding deity of the *Sree Kandaswamy Temple*, situated in the heart of Park Town, Madras. It is said that this Temple rose to its present prominence and greatness only after the Swamiji has sung these hymns; this is about the year 1830 or thereabouts.

Shanmuga (Subramany) is a luminous six-sided bead at the centre of the two eye-brows and above the

root of the nose. *Vishudi* is the name given to the seat of heart, on either side of which there is one pulse having six heads; this is also called the *Shanmuga.* Human beings are endowed with six senses which all together are called *Chitta*, *Viveka*, *Buddhi* or *Shanmuga.* In the body there are six planes, called *Aradhara* in which there are respectively six illuminations. And these also are collectively called Shanmuga.

Madham is a ruttish force or infatuation which completely deprives a man of his reason.

Mati is the impelling force or *Buddhi* the reasoning faculty.

His Grace is the only wherewithal to purchase our freedom from this earthly prison and hence the old adage, "A penniless man is not an heir of this World nor a graceless man the heir of the next World.

'Freed from disease' i.e. freed from the disease of ever-recurring births and deaths.

இறந்தவரை யெடுத்திடும்போ தரற்றுகின்றீ ருலகீர்
இறவாத பெருவரநீ ரேனடைய மாட்டீர்
மறந்திருந்தீர் பிணிமூப்பிற் சம்மதமோ நுமக்கு
மறந்துமிதை நினைக்கினல்லோர் மனநடுங்குங் கண்டீர்
சிறந்திடுசன் மார்க்கமொன்றே பிணிமூப்பு மரணஞ்
சேராமற் றவிர்த்திடுங்காண் டெரிந்துவம்மி னிங்கே
பிறந்தபிறப் பிதிற்றானே நித்தியமெய் வாழ்வு
பெற்றிடலாம் பேரின்ப முற்றிடலாம் விரைந்தே.

O! People! Ye simply give yourselves up to wild expressions of grief at the time of removal of your own dear ones who have become dead. Where is the obstacle for you to attain the great boon of Immortality?

Perhaps, it never struck you. Are you prepared to undergo sickness and old age? Beware! the good (the holy) even when they recall these quake with fear. It is the splendid *Sanmarga* only that can conquer Sickness, Old Age and Death. Wherefore, hearken unto this and come hither; ye can, in this very birth, enter into the true Everlasting Life and enjoy Eternal Happiness at once.

காயெலாங் கனியெனக் கனிவிக்கு மொருபெருங்
    கருணை யமுதே யெனக்குக்
கண்கண்ட தெய்வமே கலிகண்ட வற்புதக்
    காட்சியே கனக மலையே
தாயெலா மனையவென் றந்தையே யொருதனித்
    தலைவனே நின்பெரு மையைச்
சாற்றிட நினைத்திட மதித்திட வறிந்திடச்
    சார்கின்ற தோறு மர்தோ
வாயெலாந் தித்திக்கு மனமெலாந் தித்திக்கும்
    மதியெலாந் தித்திக்கு மென்
மன்னியவெ னறிவெலாந் தித்திக்கு மென்னிலதில்
    வருமின்ப மென்புகலு வேன்
தூயெலாம் பெற்றநிலை மேலருட் சுகமெலாந்
    தோன்றிட விளங்கு சுடரே
தூரியவெளி நடுநின்ற பெரியபொரு ளேயருட்
    ஜோதிநட ராஜ குருவே.

O! Thou, the stupendous Grace of the Elixir of life that ripens the unripe-fruit;

Thou, my visible God;

Thou, the wonderful Apparition even in this *Kali* age;

Thou, the mountain of the variest Gold ;
Thou, my Father equal to a multitude of Mothers ;
Thou my single Chief and Lord ;

Whenever I try to express in words, think, imagine and understand or realise Thy Greatness, my mouth waters, mind exults in joy, intelligence becomes pleased and all my knowledge runs into raptures. Oh ! how is language to keep pace with this happy experience.

O ! Thou the Flame pregnant with all the happiness resulting from divine grace which has its seat in the ecstatic joy of the pure hearted.

Thou, the real Essence in the centre of the mysterious and limitless Void which goes by the name *Turiya* (the fourth state).

Thou, the Teacher, Nataraja effulgent with Grace.

'Purest State': above the Sub-conscious plane and at the bottom of the Super-conscious plane.

Turiya is that ever peaceful realm of super-consciousness which is above the ordinary three stages —waking, dreaming and sleeping. Having no limiting conditions, it can never become the subject of any instrument of knowledge and it is only when *Maya* or the superimposition of the world of *Samsara*

on *Atman* is got rid of, the full knowledge of *Turiya* will be realised. It is the eternal witness of everything. It knows no change, difference or duality such as the Knower, the Known and the Knowledge. It is impossible to describe it in words.

An ordinary man ignorant of Yoga is supposed to become capable of it only through Divine Grace and we need not say much about proficiency in it. Whoever he may be, without His grace he can hardly initiate himself in Yoga-practice, much less could he aspire to be At-One-with-Him ; this is like a raw fruit that gets matured into a fully ripe one through the warmth of the sun.

மெய்தழைய வுள்ளங் குளிர்ந்துவகை மாறாது
மேன்மேற் கலந்து பொங்க
விச்சையறி வோங்கவென் னிச்சையறி யநுபவம்
விளங்கவறி வறிவ தாகி
உய்தழை வளித்தெலாம் வல்லசித் ததுதந்
துவட்டாது ணூறி யூறி
ஊற்றெழுந் தென்னையுந் தானாக்கி யென்னுளே
உள்ளபடி யுள்ள வமுதே
கைதழைய வந்தவான் கனியே யெலாங்கண்ட
கண்ணே கலாந்த நடுவே
கற்பனையி லாதோங்கு சிற்சபா மணியே
கணிப்பருங் கருணை நிறைவே
துய்தழை பரப்பித் தழைந்ததரு வேயருட்
சுகயோக யோக வருவே
சுத்தசிவ சன்மார்க்க நிதியே அருட்பெருஞ்
ஜோதிநட ராஜ பதியே.

Body getting relaxed, heart set at rest, and the two together ringing forth in fullest harmony and peace and going from strength to strength to the overflow, there soared high in me the vivacity of Intelligence (*viveaka*) so

as to launch me into actual experience which enabled me to deliberately understand what it (*viveka*) really is when, Thou hast blest me with a life endowed with Omnipotent *Siddhis*[1] ; not content with this, Thou hast also become within me the perennial spring of Nectar that transubstantiated me into Thine own Divine Reality by entering into me through and through and saturating me in and out.

Thou art like a ripe fruit in the sky that falls into the palms of a man (in that Thou revealest Thyself unto the Wise and hidest Thyself from the ignorant).

Thou art the All-Seeing eye (in that Thou hast got one dilated sight throughout or in other words, there is no corner anywhere, however obscure, that Thine eyes have not beheld).

Thou art the centre of *Kalantam,* (the *neplus ultra* of Divine Knowledge or last stage of Divine Bliss).

Thou art the central Gem of the Hall of Divine Knowledge dazzling beyond the reach

[1] Siddhis are High Yogic powers.

of imagination (in that Thou art the Self-luminous in the altar).

Thou, the beauteous Omnipresent Grace whose measure man cannot take.

Thou art like a spreading tree that hath put forth fresh spotless foliage (in that Thou art the All-pervading, the Eternal and the Resplendent).

Thou art the embodiment of the Eternal pleasure of Grace, the Eternal Enjoyment and Yoga (in that Thine Bhaktas win the pleasure of Thine Grace first, then get enjoyments on the material plane as the outcome thereof, and lastly, get absorbed into Thee).

Thou, the Riches, the *beau ideal* of pure *Siva Sanmarga* (in that it is always fixed and everlasting not subject to variations or fluctuations and available from none else but Thee).

Thou art Nataraja, the Self-Luminous Bliss (in that Thou getst Light from no one and yet diffusest Thine Own Light to save mankind from being lost in the labyrinth).

"Entering into me through and through and saturating me in and out".

The human body contains 72,000 nerve-cells. Besides this the skin, which forms the seat of touch, appears to the naked eye to be quite a single and

simple tissue; but in reality it has got an extent equivalent to more or less 15 sq. feet or 2160 sq. inches and contain something like 70,00,000 sweat tubes, each about half an inch in length opening its mouth upon its surface. To give a better idea of these little tubes it may be stated that they make about 28 miles of tiny spiral tubing in the human system.

The whole system of *Yoga-Purusha* is always absolutely clean and there is nothing to clog the passage of anything. Therefore, *Amrita*[1] permeates each and every one of the nerve-cells in super-abundance when it naturally also percolates through the pores on the skin.

The six anubhava-stages of Bliss are (1) *Vedhanta* (2) *Siddhanta* (3) *Bodhanta* (4) *Nadhanta* (5) *Yoganta* (6) *Kalanta*.

Siva (*Sivam*) means *Vasi* or breath; beginning place; *Jiva* or life; *Dipa* or light; *Yoga*; Sky—empty or void space.

பற்றறியா முத்தர்தமை யெல்லாம் வாழைப்
பழம்போல விழுங்குகின்ற பரமே மாசு
பெற்றறியாப் பெரும்பதமே பதத்தைக் காட்டும்
பெருமானே யானந்தப் பேற்றின் வாழ்வே

[1] Amrita is Ambrosia. In Yoga literature it is of 5 kinds viz.—

1. that which is oozing like the delicious spring water underneath the tongue;
2. that which is cordial-like on the tonsil;
3. that which is like the unmatured molten sugar at the most prominent part of the nose;
4. that which is like molasses or matured molten sugar or sugar in a state of coagulation in the centre of the forehead;
5. and that which is in the form of crystallized sugar or sugarcandy of super-excellent sweetness. And one, that has tasted the Amrita of this quality will attain Mukti (Emancipation).

யுற்றறியா இன்னுமின்னு மறைக ளெல்லா
மோலமிட்டுத் தேடநின்ற வொன்றே யொன்றுங்
கற்றறியாப் பேதையேன் றனக்கு மின்பங்
கனிந்தளித்த வருட்கடலே கருணைத் தேவே.

O ! Thou, the Eternal that swallowest immaculate *Muktas* as if they are ripe bananas ;
Thou, the State Exalted that is not soiled by the dust of this world ;
Thou, the Lord that leadeth unto the Goal ;
Thou, the current of Blissful Existence ;
Thou, the Indeterminate and Indeterminable One, still being constantly sought after, by the screaming and halting Vedas, bent, nevertheless, upon finding You ;
Thou, the Ocean of Grace that was pleased to concede even unto me, an ignoramus, the favour of Thy Bliss ;
Thou, the *Deva* Gracious.

Immaculate : free from the *evil qualities*[1] of the *four-fold mind*[2]; not world-rusted.

Swallowest : merging into one with the Almighty. God's love is here compared to the glutinous liking of a man for ripe fruits.

[1] Evil Qualities of Mind are 10.
1. Kama—Lust. 2. Krodha—Anger. 3. Lopa—Covetousness. 4. Mada—Pride. 5. Macharya—Envy. 6. Moha—Infatuation. 7. Damba—Vanity. 8. Dharbam—Arrogance or Haughtiness. 9. Erashai—Prejudice. 10. Asuyai—Grudge ; Hatred.

[2] Four-Fold Mind (Antahkaranas):— 1, *Manas* (Mind) 2. *Buddhi* (Sense), 3. *Chitta* (Thought) 4. *Ahankara* (the I-making faculy or ' Ego-ism ').

The dust of the world: Sinful propensities of the mind such as lust, anger, covetousness, pride, envy, greed etc.

Vedas could not find Him out because, He is on their head just as it is physically impossible for a man to see an object which is located on his head, or whoever can see Him by perusing cold-print.

கற்பங்கள் பலகோடி செல்லத் தீய
கனலினடு வூசியின்மேற் காலை யூன்றிப்
பொற்பறமெய் யுணவின்றி யுறக்கமின்றிப்
புலர்ந்தெலும்பு புலப்படவைம் பொறியை யோம்பி
நிற்பவருக் கொளித்துமறைக் கொளித்தி யோக
நீண்முனிவர்க் கொளித்தமரர்க் கொளித்து மேலாஞ்
சிற்பதத்திற் சின்மயமாய் நிறைந்து ஞானத்
திருவாள ருட்கலந்த தேவ தேவே.

களங்கமறப் பொதுநடநான் கண்டுகொண்ட தருணங்
கடைச்சிறியே னுளம்பூத்துக் காய்த்ததொரு காய்தான்
விளக்கமுறப் பழுத்திடுமோ வெம்பியுதிர்ந் திடுமோ
வெம்பாது பழுக்கினுமென் கரத்திலகப் படுமோ
கொளக்கருது மலமாயைக் குரங்குகவர்ந் திடுமோ
குரங்குகவ ராதெனது குறிப்பிலகப் படினுந்
துளக்கமற வுண்ணுவனோ தொண்டைவிக்கிக்கொளுமோ
ஜோதிதிரு வுளமெதுவோ ஏதுமறிந் திலனே.

O! Thou! The Lord of Lords! Hidest Thou Thyself, as Thou dost, from those who for crores of ages stand on needle planted amidst a blazing fire still caring for worldly objects and becoming emaciated through hard penance till their bones show out and bereft of food and sleep while engaged in it; Thou secretest Thyself from the Vedas; Thou concealest Thyself from Munis, addicted to

Yoga Sadhana; Thou art invisible to the Devas; but Thou dost identify Thyself with those brimful of Divine Wisdom who reach the highest stage of Knowledge.

(O! Thou Almighty!) When I happened to meet Thee in Thy universal dance my lowly self, moved by ecstacy, obtained a single fruit only. I am at a loss to know if it will remain with me till it becomes fully ripe conferring on me discrimination or simply perish before its time; granting that it does not perish before its time, I doubt, whether it will come into my possession without being snatched away by the monkey, the sinful *Maya* which is always wakeful in the matter of leading me into devious paths.

Even supposing that I am vigilant enough to secure the fruit vary of the above mentioned monkey, still is it Thy intention to allow me to heartily consume the fruit or to make

Kalpa (*Aeon*) is the great age of the world. This is said to be one day for *Brahma* (creator) and equal to 4,320,000,000 years.

Mala Maya is Cimmerian darkness or bad *Karma*[1] acquired through delusion.

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[1] Karma is an inscrutable decree which is of three kinds.

1. Sanjita. 2. Prarapta. 3. Agami.

Sanjita is the sum total of the good and bad deeds that are being continuously brought forward from birth

it get stuck in my throat. And I do not know what Thy Grace has in store for me.

The proud ten-headed Ravana, the Cruelty's counterpart, that ruled over Lanka the modern Ceylon, did the severest penance, a penance the mere description of which is enough to make one stagger—alas ! what for—to lead a life for 3 crores and 5 millions of years as the Lord Paramount on this Earth. Of course, he did get the boon, he prayed for, and in the intoxication of his happiness, he regarded himself as mightier than the Almighty and wrought incalculable destruction. But in the end, what was his fate ?—his lordly pride was soon humbled to the very dust, for, he died a miserable death at the hands of Sri Rama the world conqueror of the Hindu Triad.

Who has ever seen God in the books ? And Vedas are but records of His praises in cold-print which are

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to birth in one's own Balance Sheet of life during the past many many multi-crores of years commencing from time immemorial.

Prarapta is such comparative proportions of the good and bad deeds distinctly ear-marked from *Sanjita,* as are brought along with one's birth for punishment and reward according as the actions are good or bad, moral or immoral, during one's term of life on earth.

Agami is what one will earn in one's own terms of life on earth in the shape of good and bad deeds ; this will, of course, be added on to Sanjita and a fresh balance struck every time one's lease of life on earth draws to a close.

Thus it will be seen that the *Agami* of this life becomes part and parcel of *Sanjita* of the next life, or in the life to come, and that not a bit of one's good action will go unnoticed or unrewarded, nor a bad one left unpunished. Such are the dispensations of Providence in the highly complex workings of the "Law of Karma" and hence the saying "As you sow so you reap," which is seldom thought of by the mortals save at the eleventh hour when the body-machine breaks down and the mighty hydra-headed Dragon, Death comes to ingulf them.

too too deep for words. They can hardly make one meet Him face to face, much less to cultivate communion with Him, for, the proof of the pudding is in the eating, and the tree is known by its fruits.

Viswamitra originally known as *Gadheya* is certainly a *Muni* most famous for his stern *Tapas*. He did win surpassing powers by his willing endurance of great mortifications. But still, did he conquer his anger whose very counterpart he was ? And what is the result ?—he could not enter the kingdom of God, much less could he hope to be At-One-with-Him. The same remark holds good in the case of *Devas* as well.

Janaka the king of Mitula and the father of *Sita*—the spouse of Sri Rama[1]—is considered as the typical

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1. Sri Rama is an incarnation of Vishnu of the Hindu Trinity. He was born into this world as the first son of Dasaratha, King of Oudh, to establish Dharma in this land by destroying the 10-headed Ravana the very impersonation of Adharma (Evil) that had ruled over Lanka as the king of demons (Rakshashas). It happened to pass that his father had banished him into the jungles of Dandaka. Ravana took Sita away to his kingdom, Lanka. Sri Rama, becoming aware of this wicked deed, mobilized an immense army of monkies, crossed over to Lanka, killed the tyrant-king Ravana in open battle, annihilated his mighty army of Rakshashas and got back Sita his wife. All these events are depicted in the poem called "Ramayana," a work consisting of 7 books of 48000 lines in the aggregate and ranking as one of the greatest epic poems the world has ever seen.

It will, perhaps, be quite in the fitness of things to epitomise here the esoteric meaning of "Ramayana." Sri Rama is no other than the supreme Lord, the Atman; Sri Sita is the Mulaprakriti or Sakti, the action-producing agent giving rise, as a sort of sport, to creation, preservation and destruction, which is the mind ; and the 10-headed Ravana is the army of foes or felonious propensities Kama, Krodha, Mada, etc., etc., etc. One should conquer these 10 evil qualities or the 10-headed Ravana and make the mind, Sita join with, or be dissolved into, the Atman, Rama.

example among the great sages for he stood firm as a rock on the principle of Nishkama Karma. Although he was discharging his many-sided and most onorous of kingly functions, seated on his precious throne, the highest seat of earthly ambition, amidst the multiplicity of the usual state luxuries, unparalled alike for pomp and magnificience, and apparently taken for one sunk in the abysmal depths of *Samsara*, he is an out and out *Gnani* in the heart of his hearts which is the veritable storehouse of Love Divine and therefore, the fittest abode of God Almighty.

Even over those who indulge in a Yoga-practice like him without attachment to, and revulsion from, things worldly, and dispossessed of the egotism too and bid fair to be on the road to thorough success *Maya*, the sword of Damocles is hanging. That is to say, in passing through several clear-cut stages of *Yoga*—*Solokya*, *Samipya*, *Sarupya*, and *Sayujya*—the orbit of *Maya* extends as for as the very point of their merging into His absolute Nature as Love so that, if they are careless even to the infinitesimal part of a second in the course of their passage through any of the successive stages herein mentioned, that is time enough for this hellish force to throw them off their guard. Such is the burden of moral and intellectual puzzles which the human Soul has got to struggle through before finally finding shelter in Him—alas! what a slip b'twixt the cup and the lip! And how very great is the conquest of Self to assert the Kingship of Self!

The *Tapas* of Ravana and Viswamitra is called *Kamya* or *Pravirti Karma*. It is so called because it solely concerns itself with the luxuries of the body and not with the liberation of the Soul. They did not seek their fellowship and communion with God. On account of the contaminated mind, they were stone-blind to see to their ever precious Soul

and therefore, have wantonly spun on the very web of their lives what is called Fate or Destiny to carry forward the ball of passion ruling predominently in them.[1]

The *Tapas* of Janaka is called *Nishkamya* or *Nivirti Karma*, because, it pertains solely and wholely to the Spiritual standard of the Soul and not at all of the frail body; in other words, it is a *Tapas* done for its own sake, which shows the complete absence of Self and all that clings to Self or the idea of 'I'. And hence it is that he was quite in harmony with the Divine Essence as his reward.

கடல்கடந்தேன் கரையடைந்தேன் கண்டுகொண்டேன் கோயில்
கதவுதிறந் திடப்பெற்றேன் காட்சியெலாங் கண்டேன்
அடர்கடந்த திருவமுதுண் டருளொளியா லனைத்தும்
அறிந்துதெளிந் தறிவுருவா யழியாமை யடைந்தேன்
உடல்குளிர்ந்தே னுயிர்கிளர்ந்தே னுள்ளமெலாந் தழைத்தேன்
உள்ளபடி யுள்ளபொரு ளுள்ளவனாய் நிறைந்தேன்
இடர்தவிக்குஞ் சித்தியெலா மென்வசமோங் கினவே
இத்தனையும் பொதுநடஞ்செய் யிறைவனருட் செயலே.

I crossed the Ocean (of *Samsara* or wordly life), reached the shore (of Salvation) and descried the temple (of Happiness). The gates were thrown open and I feasted my eyes with many sights (of Godly experience). Here I drank the *creme de la creme* of the purest Ambrosia to my fill and by the Light of Grace, I was endowed with the Highest Knowledge (on the Law of Being viz: oneness

[1] Nevertheless Viswamitra alone become a *Brahma Rishi* after great tribulation.

of Man-Soul with the God-Soul and the Unification or fusibility of the two into one through the most complete self-abnegation) and translated into the form of Immortal Divine Knowledge.

My body becoming cooled, (bereft of passion by the absence of *Tatvas*), life stirred by the Divine ecstacy, and heart vivified (by lofty thoughts and noble ideals), I was truly converted into the very substanee of the Omnipresent Almighty of whom, I, in sooth, formed a Spark. The mighty *Siddhis* (powers capable of destroying root and branch, any obstacles) grew within me. And all these, are, of course, the gift of that Lord, the Universal Dancer.

Tatvas are entities or essences abiding in every man. They are 96 in number such as the 5 elements, organs of sensation and action, objects of senses etc., etc., of which 36 are known as Gnana Tatvas .There is a complete wreck of these Tatvas when Death, the King of Terrors, comes upon man. This death comes down like a wolf on the entire fold of Tatvas when the latter try to get out one by one. And thus sinking and sinking by slow degrees, life becomes extinct in a man.

கோடையிலே யிளைப்பாற்றிக் கொள்ளும்வகை கிடைத்த
குளிர்தருவே தருநிழலே நிழல்கனிந்த கனியே
ஓடையிலே யூறுகின்ற தீஞ்சுவைத்தண் ணீரே
உகந்ததண்ணீ ரிடைமலர்ந்த சுகந்தமண மலரே

மேடையிலே வீசுகின்ற மெல்லியபூங் காற்றே
மென்காற்றில் விளைசுகமே சுகத்திலுறும் பயனே
ஆடையிலே யெனைமணந்த மணவாளா பொதுவில்
ஆடுகின்ற வரசேயென் னலங்கலணிந் தருளே.

O! Thou, the Tree yielding cool shade for mankind to free them from their toil in hot summer;
Thou, the Shade given thereunder;
Thou, the Fruit naturally ripened in the shade;
Thou, the supremely delicious Water springing in the brook;
Thou, the beauteous and fragrant Flower agreeably blossomed in the centre of the water;
Thou, the Gale gently wafting on the high-ground;
Thou the Pleasure accuring from such soft breeze;
Thou, the resultant Pleasure;
Thou, the Bridegroom wedded to me during my playful days;
Thou, the Universal Dancer;
Please accept my garland (of words).

Tree: is the intelligence-tree in man.

Shelter: means palladium or safe-guard.

Shady: hospitable shelter (from *Maya* or it is more appropriate to call it summer-heat-like *Maya*).

Hot-summer: signifies the mighty ***Maya.***

வகை கிடைத்த—possessed of; because man alone "Looks before and after" and has got the ways and means for his final emancipation.

The intelligence has got the potentiality of keeping the heart still with the fulness of peace by warding oft the great *Maya* with its ever-increasing impediments that mantle the clearer vision.
In one place says the Swamiji:—

"என்னறிவானானென்றூதூது சங்கே"—"Blow the conch loudly and announce that He has become transformed into my very Intelligence.

Man has got the intelligence which he may use either for good or for evil. A man of *Satva Guna* [1]

Guna (bond or fetter) is of three kinds.

1. Satva (goodness or purity).
2. Rajas (passion or activity).
3. Tamas (darkness or ignorance).

Of these the first is co-existent with man in his very embrayo and the other two are the acquired or inherited ones after his coming into being into this world. When God planned humanity he did not plan evil qualities, any more than he planned sin. He does not stand for disease, any more than He stands for sin. A misuse of freewill, the breaking of the Law of Love, created sin. These three Gunas *pro tanto,* take possession of man according to his past Karma, both good and bad. When any one of these predominates in him, the other two are not so much in evidence.

Satva Guna is the essence of all that are good in characteristics and therefore, of Divine origin. It consists in the purity of mind and heart, goodness, harmlessness, truth, virtue, generosity, modesty, love for all live-creatures and all other beautiful actions pertaining to the Code of Morals, conduct or sphere of *Sanmarga.* It gives him peace of mind and happiness, developes in him the strength of will and magnetic power and makes him a true moral hero when Brahma Gnana unfolds itself to him. Thus this Satva Guna leads one into Nivarti Karma. And it behoves everyone therefore, to have an abiding faith in Divinity and to try his level best to cultivate a pure

makes the right use of it and thereby acquires that tranquility of mind that forms, as it were, the coping stone for the edifice of *Yoga* [1]. *Mukti* is the fruit of *Yoga-Sadhana* that gets matured by the usual methods of *Raja-Yaga* [2]—a process of exhaling and inhaling

character, through the constant association with Sadhus or the company of the good, reading of sacred literature, harbouring of beautiful thoughts, and sincerely and carefully abstaining from all actions that do not accord with Universal Good, Divine Love or Heavenly Justice.

Rajasa Guna fills a man with Ego and places him under the sway of Mammon whose overtures are very very tempting indeed. He entangles himself in its satanic raptures and closely pursues its shadow-pleasures by trying to do everything, right or wrong, good or bad, moral or immoral, in his own self-interest, so that, he may enjoy the fruits thereof either in this life or in the life to come. Thus this Guna leads one into praviriti karma and makes him roll on in the unceasing rotation wheel of births and deaths.

Tamasa Guna steeps one in the nethermost depths of Cimmerian darkness of ignorance and makes him a confirmed Agnostic.

[1] Yoga is a word which literally means union i.e. union of the Lower-Self with the Higher-Self; it is the practice of controlling the whirlpool of " Chitta " (mind) for the attainment of Mukti (emancipation).

[2] Raja-Yoga as the name implies, stands foremost among the many kinds of Yoga and is the most convenient for putting into actual practice. Prana or life is but a series of breaths from birth to death. It prevades the whole of nature ; it is in everything and everywhere. As a bird, that is tied to a string, is ever dragging it on in all its movements, so is the Jiva (Man-soul,) which is tied, so to speak, to the breath due to Karma being carried up and down, and and in and out, during the endless processes of exhaling and inhaling. The object of this Yoga is to control the whirpool of Chitta (mind,) so that, the Jiva freed of all its shackles go back to the Paramatman and unite with Him.

There are two things mind and Prana always going together; if either gets extirpated, the other vanishes of its own accord. Conversely, if either is in evidence, the other comes into play as well. And if these two become conjoint with each other, it paves the way to Emancipation.

respectively known as *Rechaka* and *Puraka* which do not entail on the practiser the observance of any hard and fast rules.

When Prana Vayu (oxygen) is brought under subjugation, the mind surrenders. If the mind does not surrender there will be pondering on the objects of senses; from pondering springs attraction; from attraction grows desire; desire flames to fierce passion; passion breeds recklessness, the memory—all betrayed —lets go all noble purpose and saps the mind till purpose, mind and man are all completely undone.

Wherever there is no mastery over the mind, there crop up diverse evil qualities; wherever there are evil qualities there the idea of 'Mine' dances attendance; wherever there is this idea of 'Mine' there is the Ego or the idea of 'I'; wherever there is Ego there the mind gets impure and world-rusted; when the mind is rusty, there is no dawn of Divine Wisdom; when there is an absence of Divine Wisdom, God will not unveil Himself in one's Samadhi. If one is only filled with Divine Wisdom he becomes Mahatma who sees Ekatwam (oneness) everywhere and in everything; he knows no duality, no difference, no maya, no bondage, no birth or death. And he is known as Jivan-Mukta (one holding communion with Him).

Now to come to practice :—

I. Preliminaries.

(1) The initiate must first of all keep his mind free of Rajas and Tamas through rigid moral discipline so that there is nothing but the pure Satwick nature left in him.

(2) He must follow a chaste dietry, i.e., such as will neither lead to any phlegmatic complaint nor inflamation of passions.

(3) The place of practice must be a well ventilated secluded one, always kept quite clean.

(4) He must choose some convenient asana.

(5) The practice must be regular and must commence sufficiently before sun-rise and also at sun-set, if possible.

II. Practice proper.

(i) After seating himself bolt upright with perfect command and power so that the spine may be straight and the chest thrown forward, he must put all his mind into the practice, form a clear mental picture of the breath as a fine silvery

This is the brook of the Elixir of Life or *Amrita* of the highest quality on the summit of the human brain which portion is called the *Sahasrasthala* or 1,000 petalled Lotus. Here, the *Amrita* is in a crystallised state. When a *Yogi* attains his *Samadhi* or Super Conscious state, a state in which he is able to suspend his breath so as to make it function specially upon the brain, the space between the Naval and the

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vapour and direct his most undivided attention along the passage of the in-going and out-going breaths, these breaths being drawn in and sent out very very slowly and evenly taking as much time as he possibly can during every complete process. That is to say, he must draw the breath until the lungs could no longer be inflated, and send the same out, until there is nothing left in the lungs to be exhausted, there being no haste, no jerkiness and no noise during the entire process.

(ii) He must repeat the exercise as long as possible or until the feeling of fatigue comes in.

(iii) If he only adheres to the practice with persistence and diligence for a length of time, it will form a habit in him ; he will become accustomed to deep breathing in the ordinary course, his mind growing more and more fit for increased attention, when all hard and fast rules may be relaxed. There will then be established in him a thorough mental poise and a feeling of detachment from the physical envelope which will certainly unveil the latent Divine Wisdom side by side with the development of all physic powers. In due course, as time matures, he will be. able to perceive that most Sacred Pivot-Point (turning point) at which the Sun (breath in the right nostril) changes into the Moon (breath in the left nostril) and vice versa. And if he focusses his entire attention on this point, he will turn out, a consummate Raja-Yogi and in due course identify himself with the highest Bliss.

III. Special observations :—

Here everything has been most succinctly explained without specifically touching on the several details known in Yoga

Apex of the brain is ablaze with *Yoga Agni* or fire; this fire melting the *Amrita* above referred to, the latter falls down into the mouth in very small driblets through a subtle passage below it.

This will be further elucidated by the following quotations from Swamiji :—

மடலெலா மூளைமலர்ந்திட வமுதமுடலெலா
ஊற்றெழுந்தோடி நிரம்பிட

"The brain blossoming and spreading its petals, there is oozing from it *Amrita* which permeates through every nook and corner in my body."

சேற்று நீரின்றிநற் றீஞ்சுவை தருமோ
ரூற்று நீர் நிரம்பவுடைய பூந்தடமே.

"O! Thou the Lotus-tank brim-filled not with muddy or dirty water but with *Amrita* of superfine sweetness."

தெள்ளமுதானேனென் றூதூது சங்கே.

"Blow the couch aloud and proclaim that He has become transformed into pure *Ambrosia*."

Fragrant flower: this is because the body of *Yoga purusha* has got a delightful natural aroma about it as it is clearly proved in the following words of Swamiji—

கற்பூர மணக்கின்றதென் னுடம்பு முழுதுங்
கணவர் திருமேனியிலே கலந்த மணமதுதான்.

Philosophy under the nomenclature of *Yama* (forbearance or restraint), Niyama (religious observances), *Asana* (right position or posture), *Mudra* (guestures), *Pranayama* (rythmic breathing exercise), *Pratyahara* (restraint of senses or nerve control), *Dharana* (mind control), *Dhyana* (intense contemplation), *Samadhi* (abstract meditation, trance or bliss) etc. It is needless to notice here that there are many points of vital importance which even intuition can hardly touch the surface of, and must therefore be learnt through a spiritual Guru who will of course, put in his appearance when and where necessary provided there is right earnestness coupled with iron will.

"My entire body sends forth the smell of camphor which is *ipso facto*, a proof of my being at-One-with my "Lover, the Almighty."

In the centre of the body of *Amrita* at the *Sahasrasthala*, the topmost plane in *Aradharah*[1], there is a single-petaled Lotus called *Brahma Randra* or *parakaya* which is the seat of semen or *Indria*, the *Paramatman*. Again:

என்னுளே யரும்பியென் னுளேமலர்ந்
தென்னுளே விரிந்த வென்னுடை யன்பே.

"O! Thou, my Love that budded within me, blossomed within me and had its petals spread within me."

1 Aradharah: There are several spheres or centres of forces in the human body called Chakras (planes) arranged one above the other, in which 21,600 breaths are said to function at stated intervals in a day of 24 hours. They are as under:—

Muladharah having a 4-petaled Lotus in which are said to take place 600 breaths between 6 a.m. and 6-40 a.m.

Swadisdhanah having a 6-petaled Lotus in which are said to take place 6000 breaths between 6-40 a.m. and 1-20 p.m.

Manipurakah having a 10-petaled Lotus in which are said to take place 6000 breaths between 1-20 p.m. and 8 p.m.

Anakadah having a 12-petaled Lotus in which are said to take place 6000 breaths between 8 p.m. and 2-40 a.m.

Visuddhi having a 16-petaled Lotus in which are said to take place 1000 breaths between 2-40 a.m. and 3-46 a.m.

Agnah having a 2-petaled Lotus in which are said to take place 1000 breaths between 3-46 a.m. and 4-53 a.m.

Besides the above planes, there is Saharasthala having a single-petaled Lotus. In this spot (plane) 1000 breaths are said to function from 4-53 a.m. and 6 a.m. every day when the Prana-Vayu (Oxygen) is spreading in gentle wave-like undulations.

Just as the hour-hand points to the different hours of a day on the Dial of a Clock by the unceasing swinging action of the Pendulum, even so is the breath which is continuously taking place in the different chakras as mentioned herein at the rate of 15 circuits per minute or 21,600 circuits in the aggregate, during a day of 24 hours pointing to the span of life of a man.

'High-ground': refers to the most prominent place or dais in the human body and this is no other than the Altar of the brain. When a *Yogi*[1], by virtue of his long practice, suspends his breath and is absorbed in the depth of his own Soul, the breath so suspended is gently passing up and down on the platform of the brain. Further, he draws the air in and sends it out very very slowly and it has already been explained that his breath is always made to function in the cerebral regions; this must necessarily produce the gentle undulating waves just like the wafting of a gale.

This pleasure is hardly imaginable. It is *Satchi-dhanandah* (*Sat-Chit-Ananda*) i.e. Existence-Knowledge-Bliss or transcendent Bliss. The very air which a *Yogi* breaths in, breaks forth into ripples of joy. Besides this, the breath that has been made to function on the *Brama Randra* during one's *Yoga Samadhi* being completely shut up within the body, and finding no means of escape, gets infuriated and creates a tumultuous uproar in its endless circuits from the summit of the brain to each and every one of the 72,000 nerve-cells distributed throughout the body through a most subtle capillary white tube called the Spinal Chord within the spinal column connecting the brain in the skull at the back of the body. During this process 10 different kinds of Divine melodies, emanating from the mighty syllable *Om*[2] is carried to the *Yogi's* ears.

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[1] Yogi: one who practices Yoga.

[2] Om is a word of mono-syllable pronounced with the broad sound of the first letter 'O'. It is the most powerful and all important word in all the Mantras and the epitome of all that is most sublime and beautiful. The word is most pregnant with

Says the Swamiji :—

கீதவகை பாடிகின்றார் பாங்கிமாரே—அது
கேட்டுமதி மயங்கினேன் பாங்கிமாரே.

"I was spell-bound by the diverse divine melodies or music created unstruck within me."

சந்நிதியிற் சென்றுநான் பெற்றபேறது
சாமியறிவாரடி—அம்மா
சாமியறிவாரடி.

"What all boons were bestowed upon me on my approach to His August Throne 'tis hard for words to describe. And it is known only to Him and to Him alone."

ஆணிப்பொன்னம்பலத்தே கண்டகாட்சிகள்
அற்புதக்காட்சியடி—அம்மா
அற்புதக்காட்சியடி.

"Wonderful are the sights that my eyes feasted upon at the Golden Durbar Hall of my Lord."

Thus a description of the 'pleasure' surpasses the utmost stretch of human expression.

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meaning which, for variety and extent, has, perhaps, no equal. The highest reverence and awe is attached to this word and attempt at cataloguing all its meanings, at any rate, within this limited space is, to say the least impossible ; however a few of its interpretations are adverted to here, so that they may convey to the readers an idea, however meagre, of its immense significance.

The word should properly consist of three letters *A*, *U* and *M*, the *A* and the *U* together forming the dipthong "O". It points to the Trinity, Brahma-Vishnu-Siva, the '*A*' signifying Brahma the Creator, the '*U*' Vishnu the preserver and the '*M*' Siva or Rudra the Destroyer ; it indicates the three tenses or times the '*A*' denoting the past, the '*U*' the present and the '*M*' the future ; it refers to personifications of the Triad in elements, the '*A*' attributing to Agni (Fire,), the '*U*' Varuna (Water) and the '*M*' Marut or Vayu (Air) ; it serves to imply the entire body of human being, the '*A*' represent the bottom portion or the foot, the '*U*' the middle portion or the naval, and the '*M*' the top or the predominent portion, the head ; it refers to the three Vedas '*A*' implying Rig-Veda, the '*U*' Yajur-Veda and the '*M*' Sama-Veda ; etc., etc., etc.

What is the Upshot? The Yogi becomes the *persona grata* at His great court. He becomes immortal and Omnipotent.

When one attains the highest perfection in *Yoga* practice he enjoys God as All Love.

The Almighty dances in common and is most impartial. In His bountiful Mercy, He is ever ready to court or woo the love of anybody provided the latter cares or longs for it in right earnest. Because the Swamiji cared for His Love, longed for His Love and wooed Him, the latter readily reciprocated the Love by having him united to Him in Divine Wedlock.

Here the address is to the Almighty within, Who is in the form of Intelligence, Dispeller of ***Maya***, ***Guru*** that initiates and aids one to reach the highest rung in the ladder of *Yoga-Sadhana* so as to transform one into the very Spirit of the Omnipotent Being, *Amrita* bestowing immortality, *Indria*, Breath etc., etc.

For obvious reasons, the explanations have been pulled up from running into any further length although volumes can be written to expound the truth conveyed in the stanza.

கரைந்துவிடா தென்னுடைய நாவகத்தே யிருந்து
கனந்த சுவைதருகின்ற கற்கண்டே கனிவாய்
விரைந்துவந்தென் றுன்பமெலாந் தவிர்த்தவரு ளமுதே
மெய்யருளே மெய்யாகி விளங்குகின்ற விளக்கே
திரைந்தவுடல் விரைந்துடனே பொன்னுடம்பே யாகித்
திகழ்ந்தழியா தோங்கவருள் சித்தேமெய்ச் சத்தே
வரைந்தென்னை மணம்புரிந்து பொதுநடஞ்செய் யரசே
மகிழ்வொடுநான் புனைந்திடுஞ்சொன் மாலையணிந் தருளே.

O! Thou, the Sugar-Candy that without melting lends constant sweetness to my tongue

Thou, the Grace of Ambrosia that deprived me of wordly anguish (tore me from the bonds of ' self ') ;
Thou, who art the real Grace ;
Thou, the self-effulgent Lamp ;
Thou, the sublime Knowledge of Grace which will transmute the base and artificial body into an Imperishable one of glittering gold ;
Thou, the veriest Existence ;
Thou, the universal Dancing Lord *Paramatma* that dances in unison with my human Soul ;
Gladly accept the posy of words (songs) that I compose for Thee.

நானென்றுந் தானென்றும் நாடாத நிலையில்
ஞானவடிவாய் விளங்கும் வானநடு நிலையே,
யூனென்று முயிரென்றுங் குறியாமே முழுது
மொருவடிவாத் திருவடிவ முவந்தளித்த பதியே,
தேனென்றுங் கரும்பென்றுஞ் செப்பரிதாய் மனமுந்
தேகமுமுன் னுயிருணர்வுந் தித்திக்குஞ் சுவையே,
வானென்று மொளியென்றும் வகுப்பரிதாம் பொதுவில்
வயங்குநடத் தரசேயென் மாலையுமேற் றருளே.

O ! Thou the State Absolute occupying the centre of the firmament in the form of effulgent Wisdom which admits of being conceived neither as 'I' nor as 'Myself' (freed from egoism) ;

Thou the Lord that was pleased to endow me with a body which is the very personification of beauty and which can be identified neither as the embodiment of flesh and blood nor as life only;

Thou, the Taste of Sweetness *par excellence* that is sharply felt even by the very mind, body and the depth of consciousness whose source cannot be attributed to either honey or the sugarcane;

Thou, Lord the Universal Dancer that cannot be differentiated either as the sky or the light therein;

Accept my garland (of verses) as well.

I *i.e.*, the man; the 'I', the ego; freed from the selfish ideas and selfish propensities.

வான்வண்ணக் கருமுகிலே மழையே நீல
மணிவண்ணக் கொழுஞ்சுடரே மருந்தே வானத்
தேன்வண்ணச் செழுஞ்சுவையே ராம நாமத்
தெய்வமே நின்புகழைத் தெளிந்தே ஓதா
ஊன்வண்ணப் புலைவாயர் இடத்தே சென்றுங்
குழைக்கின்றேன் செய்வகையொன் றுணரேன் அந்தோ
கான்வண்ணக் குடும்பத்திற் கிலக்கா என்னைக்
காட்டினையே யென்னே நின்கருணை யீதோ.

O! Thou the sky-like black cloud;
Thou, the rain;
Thou, the Sapphire-like bright dazzling flame;
Thou, the *panacea*;

Thou, the Honeyed sweetness of rich *Ambrosia* ;

Thou, the Deity signified by the name '*RAMA*';

My lot is cast in the company of men with filthy and fleshy mouths that do not know thy praise. I do not know what to do. Alas! Thou hast floated my bark in the dreary forest-like *Samsara*. Ah! Good Gracious! Is this Thine mercy.

"Sky-like black cloud and sapphire" points to God Vishnu, the keeper of *Maya* who is also surcharged with Grace. Here the address is to Sri Maha Vishnu of the Hindu Triad.

Another explanation also may be given here: the cave of human heart contains the sky in the shape of white Lotus blossom amidst which there is a sea of water. In the centre of this sea resides Sri Maha Vishnu in the form of the sprout of a microscopic seed dazzling like the lightning in the black clouds. For this reason He is also called *Narayana* (*Nara*-Water; *Ayana*-place or seat) or one that has water as His abode; or *Stchiraptivasa* the one that has got the sea as His seat; or *Hirdaya Kamalavasa* the one who resides in the lotus of the heart.

Panacea; frees one from the diseases of sin and death.

He is called the Rain because He pours down His Grace to still the thirst of the Soul *i.e.*, for the redemption of mankind.

The *Ambrosia*: Steeps one in perpetual joy.

The word "*Rama*" (ராம) is one the of mightiest in the whole of *Mantras*.

It is made up of *Ra-Ah-Ma* (ர-ஆ-ம) of which the first comes from the *Patala Loka* or the nethermost world and is capable of landing (*Bhaktas*) from the Ocean of *Samsāra* on the shore of *Salvation*; the second comes from the *Earth* and is capable of giving them *Bliss*; and the last comes from the *Maharloka* or the *Great World* or the topmost world and is capable of immortalising them, endowing them at the same time, with all kinds of *Siddhis*, including the temporal gratifications of *Dharma* (*Virtue*), *Artha* (*Wealth*) and *Kama* (*Desire*).

To be brief, no sin is so great that it cannot be washed off by it, neither any happiness so high as to be beyond the reach of the man who uses this *All-Important* word in his *Japam* (meditation) day in and day out.

உலகம் புரக்கும் பெருமான்றன் உளத்தும் புயத்தும் அமர்ந்தருளி
உவகை யளிக்கும் பேரின்ப வுருவே யெல்லாம் உடையாளே
திலகஞ் செறிவா ணுதற்கரும்பே தேனே கனிந்த செழுங்கனியே
தெவிட்டா தன்பர் உளத்துள்ளே தித்தித் தெழுமோர் தெள்ளமுதே
மலகஞ் சகத்தேற் கருளளித்த வாழ்வே யென்கண் மணியேயென
வருத்தந் தவிர்க்க வருங்குருவாம் வடிவே ஞான மணிவிளக்கே
கலகர் தரம்போற் கருணைபொழி தடங்கண் திருவே கண்ணமங்கைத்
தாயே சரணஞ் சரணமிது தருணங் கருணை தருவாயே.

O! Thou the Impersonation of Eternal Bliss
that createth immense Joy by settling
in the heart and on the shoulders of the
All-Wise Creator that giveth birth to the
world ;

Thou, the possessor of everything ;

Thou, who is as sweet as sugar-cane and having a lustrous forehead with a fragrant mark symbolical of Thy radiant Grace;

Thou, the fully matured fruit whose sweetness has even reached the perfection of honey;

Thou, the placid Ambrosia that does not satiate the palate and that vivefies in the heart of hearts of Bhaktas (as a result of their extreme Love for Thee);

Thou, the Eternal Life that hast conferred liberation upon me the *Malakanchugaten*;

Thou, the dear as the pupil of my eye;

Thou, who assumeth the shape of the preceptor that dispels all my anguish;

Thou, the precious Lamp of the gem of Divine knowledge;

Thou, the firmament of Grace that pours down Thy rain of Mercy (to confer Beatitude);

Thou, the All-mother at Thirukkannamangai;

I take refuge in Thee. This is the occasion to show Thy mercy (otherwise I would go to Hell).

This poem is in praise of the Goddess Sri Thirukkannamangai Tayar the consort of Sri Maha Vishnu, at Thirukkannamangai a sacred place of pilgrimage a few miles off Nannılam on the South Indian Railway.

The world is a *Maya* of which Sri Vishnu is the keeper; hence, He is also called the Deceitful Wire-puller that shifts the scenes on this World's stage (கபட நாடக சூத்திரதார்). The world is said to be abiding in Him during the Great Deluge or Cataclysm, a theory which postulates the repeated destruction of all life followed by fresh creations. He is the Author of Evolution and Involution.

In the whole human body the most prominent part is the forehead. Caste marks are worn here just to point out the sacred seat of the Holy of the Holies (vide page 8 footnote 3 and also Chapter VII of this volume).

Malakanchugaten: In the Upanishads the body is said to be a collection of repugnant things dressed up by the skin. The owner of the body is the human Soul who has to reach the goal *viz.*, the Divine Soul. The word therefore signifies the "I" in the human body who has been gifted with the goal.

Thou, the precious lamp of the Gem of Divine knowledge: It is He and none else but He that illumines this world and delivers same from the darkness of sin. Surely to put in the words of Tennyson—

"The old order changeth, yielding place to new
And God fulfils Himself in many ways."

கண்கண்ட பூதலமெலாஞ் சன்மார்க்கங் கலந்துகொண்டே
பண்கொண்ட பாடலிற் பாடிப்படித்துப் பரவுகின்றார்
விண்கொண்ட சிற்சபையொன்றே நிறைந்து விளங்குகின்ற
தெண்கொண்ட மற்றமத மார்க்கம்யாவு மிறந்தனவே.

Throughout the nook and corner of this visible world the people embrace *Sanmarga* and delighting in the singing and reading of its lyrical psalms, get themselves saturated. The *Chit Sabah*, pregnant with the inner sky of consciousness as hidden in the depths of each individual soul, is assuredly the only one that is conspicuous evidence everywhere. And all other cults have become clean wiped out of existence.

இன்பப் பெருக்கே யருட்கடலே யிறையே யழியா விரும்பொருளே
யன்பர்க் கருளும் பெருங்கருணை யரசே யுணர்வா லாம்பயனே
வன்பர்க் கரிதாம் பரஞ்சோதி வடிவே வடிவேன் மணியேயென்
றுன்பத் திடரைப் பொடியாக்கிச் சுகந்தந் தருளத் துணியாயே.

O ! Thou the transcendental pleasure ;
Thou, the Ocean of Grace ;
Thou, the Lord protector ;
Thou, the wealth Imperishable and Unimpaired ;
Thou, the Lord Gracious unto Thine *Bhaktas* ;
Thou, the fruit of one's feeling ;
Thou, the great light inaccessible to the wicked ;
Thou, the Gem bearing the sharpest lance ;
Can's't Thou not deign to annihilate the miserable obstacles in the way of my

life and lead me on to the province of Bliss.

காற்றாலே புவியாலே ககன மதனாலே
    கனலாலே புனலாலே கதிராதி யாலே
கூற்றாலே பிணியாலே கொலைக் கருவியாலே
    கோளாலே பிறவியற்றுங் கொடுஞ் செயல்களாலே
வேற்றாலே யெஞ்ஞான்று மழியாதே விளங்கும்
    மெய்யளிக்க வேண்டுமென்றேன் விரைந்தளித் தானெனக்கே
ஏற்றாலே யிழிவெனநீர் நினையாதீ ருலகீர்
    எந்தையருட் பெருஞ்ஜோதி யிறைவனைச் சார்வீரே.

I prayed for a never-decaying body such as is not liable to be destroyed either by the wind, or by the earth, or by the sky, or by the fire, or by the water, or by the sun and the moon, or by the Lord of Death, or by the diseases, or by the destructive weapons, or by the (nine) planets, or by the ever so many other destructive acts of living beings. And He has soon granted me the boon. O! People! Sure it is. Don't think meanly of this. Bestir yourselves to reach my Heavenly Father, the Sovereign Lord of the Eternal Light.

This Stanza particularly describes how the disciple can attain the Goal by contemplation of the sacred syllable "OM".

சித்திக ளெல்லாம் வல்லதோர் ஞானத்திருச்சபை
    தன்னிலே திகழுஞ்
சத்திக ளெல்லாஞ் சத்தர் களெல்லாந் தழைத்திடத்
    தனியருட் செங்கோல்

சத்திய ஞானம் விளக்கியே நடத்துந் தனிமுதற்
றந்தையே தலைவா
பித்தியலுடையே னெனினு நின்றனக்கே பிள்ளை
நான் வாடுதல ழகோ.

O! Thou Father, the most High and Matchless, that ruleth with the Rod of Absolute Grace, surrounded by many *Yogic* powers and *Yogis*, in the splendid Durbar Hall of Wisdom endowed with the several super-human powers and thus revealeth the nature of Satya Gnana (true Wisdom)!

Even if it is considered temerity, I am none else than Thine own son. And does it behove Thee, therefore, to see me in this sad plight ?

மாடமிசை யோங்குநிலா மண்டபத்தே யெனது
மணவாளர் கொடுத்ததிரு வருளமுது மகிழ்ந்தே
ஏடவிழ்பூங் குழலாய்நா னுண்டதொரு தருணம்
என்னையறிந் திலனுலகந் தன்னையுநா னறியேன்
தேடரிய நறும்பாலுந் தேம்பாகு நெய்யுந்
தேனுமொக்கக் கலந்ததெனச் செப்பினுஞ் சாலாதே
ஈடறியாச் சுவைபுகல வென்றாலே முடியா
தென்னடியோ வவ்வமுதம் பொன்னடி தாணிகரே.

கள்ளுண்டா ரெனப்புகன்றார் கனகசபை நடுவே
கண்டதுண்டு சிற்சபையி லுண்டதுமுண் டடிநான்
எள்ளுண்ட பலவிடயத் திறங்குங்கள் என்றே
என்றுமிற வாநிலையா விருத்துங்கள் ளுலகர்
உள்ளுண்ட போதுமயக் குற்றிடுங்கள் ளலவே
உள்ளமயக் கத்தனையு மொழித்திடுங்கள் மடவாய் !
அள்ளுண்ட பிறகுமெனை யடுத்தடுத்துக் கண்டால்
அறிவுதரு மவர்க்குமிங்கே யானுண்ட கள்ளே.

O ! Thou, Maid with full-blown flowers in thy braid of hair !

When I took in the sacred Ambrosia of Grace which my Spouse had offered me with pleasure amidst the bower-mansion of the house lit by the ascending Moon, I was beside myself, insensible to the world. Even if I compare it to a delectable compound of the most palatable milk, sweetest jam, and the rarest ghee and honey, I shall not be doing justice to its sweetness; Its cloying nature outruns my powers of description. What ! only the Golden feet (of my spouse) can match it.

O my female companion ! I was charged with drunkenness. True it is that I saw the toddy in the midst of the Golden Hall (of Wisdom). True it is that I had my carousal in *Chit-sabah.* Take heed, that it is not the toddy that impels one to various evil deeds, on the other hand, it is this toddy that lead, one to the immortal state. It is not the toddy which causes delusion. Oh Lady ! This toddy on the other hand, it is that dispels illusion and imparts good sense to those insensate

beings that happen to be by my side noticing my trance again and again.

These two stanzas deal with the Swamiji's pure experience in the form of a conversation between two or more imaginary persons of whom, the person addressed, is a lady. Here the toddy is no other than the Elixir of knowledge. Chit-Sabah is the spot where Divine Bliss is in superabundance.

When a Yogi espies the Supreme Soul in the depth of his own consciousness, he naturally enters into a state of trance, when the common world mistakes him for a drunken man. It is no wonder when we recall the following utterences:—

"A wise man, is a man fallen among wild
beasts." —*Plato.*

"A wise man poor
Is like a sacred book that is never read;
To himself he lives, and to all else seems dead
This age thinks better of a gilded fool;
Than of a threadbare saint in wisdom's
school." —*Dekker.*

துன்பெலாந் தீர்ந்தன சுகம்பலித் ததுநினைச்
சூழ்ந்த தருளொளி நிறைந்தே
சுத்தசன் மார்க்கநிலை யநுபவம் நினக்கே
சுதந்தரம தான துலகில்
வன்பெலா நீக்கிநல் வழியெலா மாக்கிப்பேர்
வாழ்வெலாம் பெற்று மிகவும்
மன்னுயி ரெலாங்களித் திடநினைத் தனையுன்றன்
மனநினைப் பின்ப டிக்கே
யன்பநீ பெருகவுல வாதுநீ டூழியிலை
யாடுக வருட் ஜோதியாம்
ஆட்சிதந் தோமுனைக் கைவிடோம் கைவிடோம்
ஆணைநம் மாணை யென்றே

இன்புறத் திருவாக் களித்தெனு ளேகலந்
திசைவுட னிருந்த குருவே
எல்லாஞ்செய் வல்லசித் தாகிமணி மன்றினில்
இலங்கு நடராஜ பதியே.

O! Thou, the Eternal Dancer! The All-powerful Adept seated resplendent on the richly jewelled throne; Thou, the *Guru* that has joined Thy soul in mine, and is abiding in me; Thou, hast been pleased to give me this heartening assurance.

"Oh My love! All thy miseries have perished. Thy happiness has now fructified. Thou hast been filled with the Light of Grace. Thou hast become the heir of the kingdom of stainless righteous path. Thou hast once thought of evading vice, adopting virtue, obtaining the Real Life and of highly gladdening the heart of all beings. Oh my friend! May you attain everything that you desire. May you revel in Eternal life for ages. We have invested thee with the insignia of the Light of Grace. We shall never forsake thee. We shall never forsake thee. Take Our word for it. Take Our word for it."

• *Sanmarga* is moral rectitude. The indispensable qualification of one aspiring for Salvation is the development of true moral character and any

Tapas (austerity) that is done without this essential, will be something like a building built upon sand.

The Swamiji has got the option of living on earth as long as he likes and at the end may become fused into One-With-Him, and not that he will share the fate of ordinary mortals. He having wrung out a boon from Him already to this effect, there is no question of the deceitful *Maya's* wagging its tail with him any more. And it has once for all left him, never again to return.

CHAPTER XIV

The Swamiji's prose work—The life of Vethi Vidangan—His exposition of Raja Neethi—His masterly handling of the theme—Closing remarks.

IN the previous Chapter enough has been said as regards the Swamiji's work in Verse which is indeed a poetical expression of his Soul overflowing with Divine Love. And what about his prose works? He has written several prose books all of which are remarkable alike for greatness of expression and elevation of thought. Of these, the Life of Vethi Vidangan, known as *Manumurai Kanda Vachagam*, is a singularly good production in the inimitable style of the Swamiji. The treatise is mostly in the form of didactic discourses teeming with maxims and morals, wise sentiments and striking thoughts, true religious fear and sound ethical teaching. It is therefore, a truly fascinating and sublime study as it imparts that most edifying and exemplary instruction which promises the blessing and protection of the

Great Unseen Hand to all those who walk, with steadfast faith, by the universal rules of Equity and Justice.

We subjoin below an Appreciation from the pen of Rao Sahib N. Thiagaraja Aiyer Avl., M.A.,L.T., F.M.U., Principal, H. H. The Maharaja's College, Pudukottah. The Appreciation speaks for itself.

" Ramalinga Swamy, sage, poet, philosopher and Saint is one of the latest products of dravidian culture, and one of its most precious jewels. Not very many years ago, he lived among us and sang hymns that having been sung from the depths of life have direct appeal therefore to the heart and the spirit. His songs are the songs of the Tamil race and part of the National Treasure. They come to us in moments of joy and misery ; and the surest proof of their having become part of our life is in the fact that they have become part of folklore.

His aspirations were high, heaven high and he sang his heart out in strains of unpremeditated out-pouring. But those who know him only as a singer have missed the full scope of his genius. He was the first

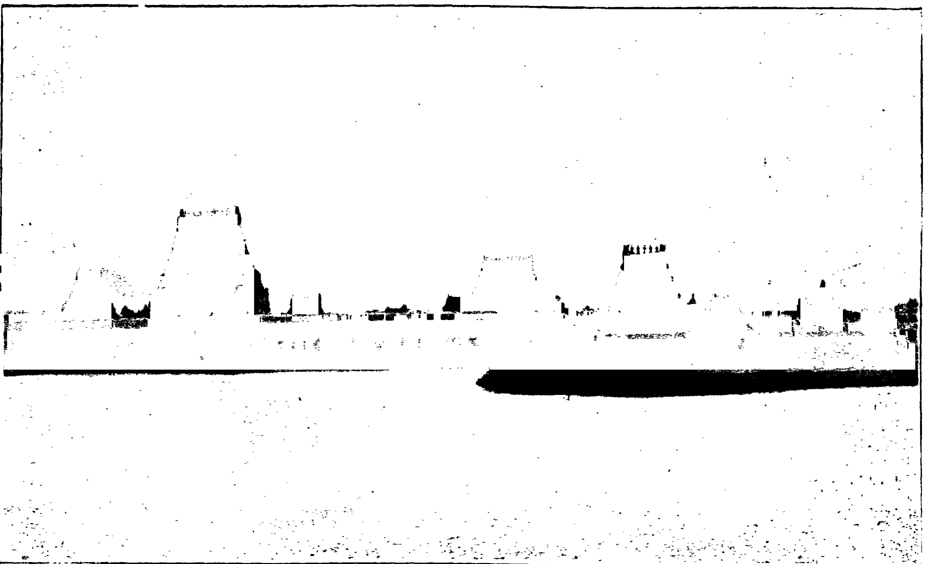
writer practically to break ground and write in Vernacular prose. He inherited a tradition in Tamil Literature, in which poesy, alone counted; and the muses were supposed to be derisive of prose. But he may well be called the father of modern prose; and the racy vernacular of to-day as read in Tamil fiction and journalism may be said to have risen from his prose: so modern is it; so racy; so vernacular.

Yet like the prose of to-day, it has not taken body and shape from foreign borrowings, or slang; or dialect. It is the prose of Tamil undefiled; the prose of Eloquence and Rhetoric—indeed what is to be expected of a great poet—who designs to pour his burning thoughts in moulds freer than those of poetry and which prose alone will easily supply. It is in fact poetic prose; and narrowly escapes in places from the charge of being prose poetry. Its frequent moralisings, the luxury of its alliteration, the exuberance of its simile and metaphor and the constant appeal to mere idealism, and utopian perfection in men and things are the betrayals of the poetic mind surging behind

that of the Prose writer; and may be excused by reason of the noble emotions and the lofty ideals of human conduct and life, for the elucidation of which these poetic devices have become employed in prose.

Ramalinga Swami's *Manumurai Kanda Vachakam*" is a noble story told in noble prose. When we find that the King is 'Manu,' and his minister is *Kalavallabhan*, we begin to suspect that the story may be a legend without historical foundation, and that 'Tiruvaroor' and 'Tyagesar' may have come in to give a local habitation to the legend; or to please some local chieftain whose praises a Tamil bard sang to please or to instruct, by apportioning the great sacrifice in the story to one of his princely ancestors. It is also for the critic of *Peria-Puranam* to find out, for this is a story from *Peria Puranam*—whether the original story is or is not apocryphal, in the *Periyapuranam* itself, and if it did not owe its origin to bardish imaginations rather than to history.

But we are not concerned here primarily with the origin of the story itself; and our main business is an appreciation of Ramalinga



9. The Great Temple at Tiruvarur.

So there were penances and prayers in the royal household; and special worships to the tutelary God. The prayers were heard and a son was born—here again we have inevitably, the oriental old world sentiment—perfect in limb and form, perfect in mental and moral graces; and he soon shot up into the most handsome prince in Tiruvaroor, more learned than his teachers; educated in all the arts of the body, mind and spirit; the cynosure of all eyes—of both sexes—the darling of the nation and the future hope of his country.

What can be more natural for such a prince on coming of age, than that he should desire to visit the temple of his family deity, and worship at the altar of the divinity through whose especial grace he was born; what more appropriate than that he should like a dutiful son, take the permission for the act from his parents; and surrounded by a princely paraphernalia should drive in state towards the temple, in a chariot drawn by horses.

But the tragedy came through the last arrangement. Whether the horses proved

restive we do not know; but, mysteriously enough, a new born bull calf, breaking away from its dam, and slipping through the crowded spectators and the procession fell under the chariot-wheels and died. Its mangled body lay there in the street, to be sought after by the dam, a few minutes later, in all the agony of bereaved motherhood.

Our modern days replete with accidents, by car, train and flood are callous to these sufferings; we pass them by; and there is not even a coroner's inquest unless the victim is a human being. No so in the halcyon days of *Manu Chola* at Tiruvaroor. Man and beast were alike protected; the same soul was in them all; and the perpetrator of the murder was open to the old law of tooth for a tooth and an eye for an eye. Life must be taken for life.

The king's son knew all this; and shuddered to realise what he had done; or rather what had happened. He lamented his rash decision to drive in a chariot rather than go to the temple on foot: wished in a thousand ways that it had not happened and felt that his own death was the deserved punishment;

though he was finally persuaded to seek penitential rites for the expiation of the sin.

Meanwhile matters took a different turn at the royal court, where all on a sudden, as the King and ministers were in serious consultation, the alarm bell in front of the Palace usually rung in times of grave injustice rang violently and enquiry showed it was the cow—the dam of the murdered calf that had arrived at the royal precincts seeking justice. The consternation of the king at this juncture, torn between paternal love and a sense of justice had better be imagined than described. But was he not the descendent of the Sun race—of King Sipi who, to do justice, cut his flesh from his body to save a sparrow when its body was demanded of a vulture—was he not himself a *Manu*, sworn by tradition and principle and practice to deal out justice, though it might cost him his only son? What though he had, on hearing his birth, joyed as the merchant does on hearing the return of his long-lost ship or as the lover does when his long-lost love is restored to his arms;—his son must die.

In vain, indeed, did his ministers point out the real nature of the accident that had happened. The prince was not responsible for the death of the calf. He would not have seen its approach—the spectators were all around the chariot; he was not reported to have driven rashly; the calf looked like a magic calf; there was a mystery about its sudden intrusion and death. After all it was an animal that had died; and a human life should not be taken in return.

The King takes an idealistic view of his duties. To him the cow[1] is not a mere beast but even more precious than man; being the sacred animal of the Vedas, according to

[1]Here the following extract from the pen of Sir Monier Monier-Williams about the sacredness of cow may not be out of place as it strikingly illustrates the superb attitude of the Hindus towards the animal—"The cow is of all animals the most sacred. Every part of its body is inhabited by some deity or other. Every hair on its body in inviolable. All its excreta are hallowed. Not a particle ought to be thrown away as impure. On the contrary, the water it ejects ought to be preserved as the best of holy water—as semi-destroying liquid—which sanctified everything it touched, while nothing purifies like the cow-dung. Any spot which a cow has condescended to honour with the sacred deposit of her excrement is for over afterwards consecrated ground, and the filthiest place plastered with it is at once cleansed and freed from pollution, while the ashes produced by burning this hallowed substance are of such a holy nature that they not only make clean all material things, however previously unclean, but have only to be sprinkled over a sinner to convert him into a saint."

which, beings and spirits, superior to man, lived in its body. The woes of the animal in death were great as those of man; and love and respect for animal life, and the knowledge that the same God animated all creation should make us see the equal value of all life. His ministers had said that the death of the calf was fate; but he for one would not take that view. Stronger than fate was human action; and his son stood condemned by his action; Justice was now called for, not from the standpoint of his son, but of the cow. If he failed in this act of justice, it was the day of doom for himself, the day of disgrace for his solar race; and the day of ruin for his dynasty. The future would point its finger of scorn at him as the last ignoble King of Tiruvaroor who by his partiality for his son lost all claims to the name of 'Manu' to which he was born. No—a thousand times No. his own minister—Kalavallabha—should drive a chariot over his son's body till he was done to death.

But no minister—not even the most docile and obedient of ministers could do it; and no wonder that returning home rather

than take the Prince's life, the minister committed suicide.

Here the grotesque begins and the oriental love of the miraculous manifests itself in its lurid hue. Justice—mad, the King himself—father as he is—drives the chariot upon the prostrate body of his willing son, in the very same spot, in which the calf had been crushed to death. The son closes his eyes in adoration of 'Tyagesar'; and dissected limb from limb and trunk from head the innocent prince lies a moment later, a ghastly horror in the blood smeared street —a sight too much even for the Gods. 'Tyagesa' now appears on the scene, and restores three lives—of the calf's, the prince's and the minister's; makes a King and Queen happy; the cow rejoice in the happiness of restored motherhood, and a whole people pleased in that they had indeed a 'Manu' for their King—one who for the sake of justice—would kill his own son, though the injured party was but a beast.

And finally, the mystery is resolved; and the secret is told from the divine lips of 'Tyagesar'. There was really neither cow

nor calf in the case at all. The calf was a magic creature that He had commissioned to come to test Manu's firm faith in justice. Manu had vindicated his greatness; and all shall be well.

The tale is thus not modern enough, and the admixture of the marvellous may not please all tastes. The King's advocacy of justice may fail of justice in that it fails of doing justice to his own son who is innocent. But all this is beside the point: These faults are the faults of the story; and not of the story-teller. Ramalinga Swami has taken a story which may be inherently incredible, but he has given it the garb of fact, the glamour of romance; the life of truth; and the blessedness of great stories that greatly point a moral and adorn a tale."

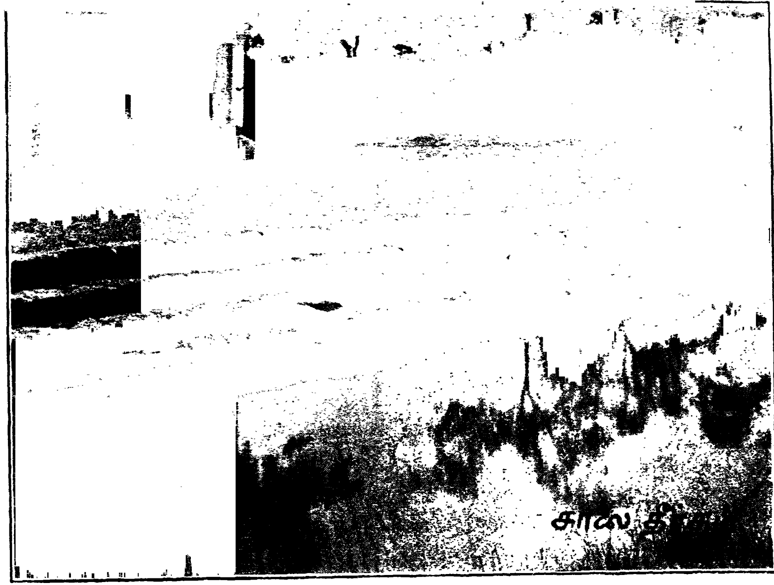
CHAPTER XV

Conclusion—Swamiji's miraculous birth and disappearance—He is a born-scholar and a born-Yogi—The reminiscences of the Swamiji by a few of his disciples still living—His compassion for mankind and his humanitarian Mission—The apathy of the people and the failure of his purpose—The universal and undogmatic nature of his Gospel—The Satya-Gnana Sabha as the monument of his greatness and its edifying influence in the world—Some apt master-pieces from James Allen—Prayer for our redemption.

FROM the narrative and illustrative extracts, presented in the foregoing pages, it will be evident to our readers that the life of the Swamiji begins and ends with miracles. It is, therefore, impossible not to class him both as a born-scholar and a born-Yogi. He was a born-scholar in as much, as he distinguished himself as the first among the great intellectual giants of his age, and every page of his immortal work, *Tiru Arulpa,* bears the hall-mark of his literary excellence

and dazzling genius presenting us, at the same time, with quite an adequate image of our life in its oceanic amplitude and variety, of the eternal significance of which it is the finger-mark. He was a born-Yogi, in as much as his eventful life, which was inquestionably characterised by super-human adventures, revealed him to be an *Avatar* of no mean order.

It will be interesting to refer to the fact that there are still living a few people of the old type, long past the Biblical age of three score and ten, that had seen the Swamiji with their own eyes and heard, at first hand, his living word ; some of them are his disciples who had got themselves initiated in his imagery and thoughts. Not infrequently, these disciples, in spite of their green old age, carry back their memory to, and call up visions of, those blessed sweet days and exclaim in their paroxysm of joy and with profuse tears in their eyes, how benign and angelic the appearance of the Swamiji was refulgent with divinity ; what a life of naive simplicity and altruism he was leading; how abundant the milk of human kindness was



11. The Sacrosanct Spring at Vadalur.



12. The Swamiji's Favourite Mango Tree.

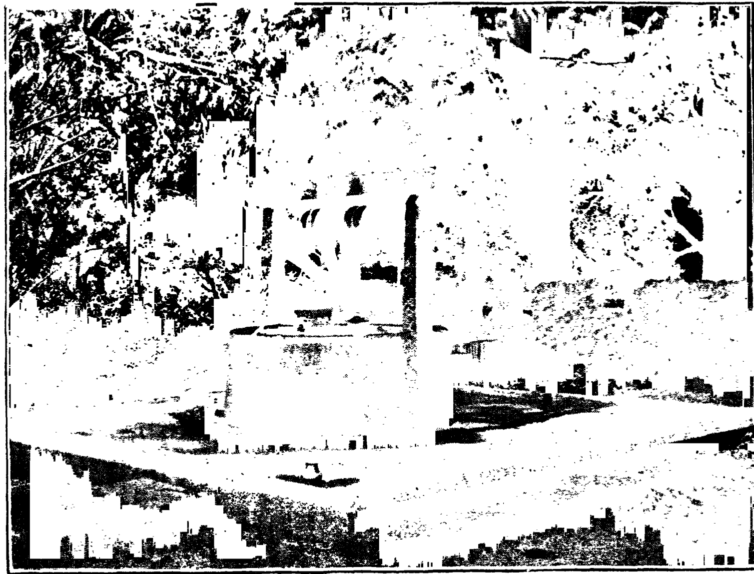
flowing in him ; how swift he walked, a mere skeleton though he appeared ; how he was not ever known to take any rest day in and day out ; how sublimely pure he was ; how grave and dignified his tone was ; how his voice was, like celestial music heard in the air ; how in the usual march of events his prophecies are being fulfilled ; how often he metamorphosed mere dross into gold and flung the same in the adjoining wells, tanks or rivers with such nonchalance as mere trash ; how hard he toiled to spread the Gospel of Divine Love in every stratum of society ; with what an unremitting zeal and inspiring industry he was carrying on his propaganda work, lecturing sometimes under the swaying foliage of mango-trees, and sometimes in open meadows, bushy places, farms and sheep-runs, in broad daylight and under cover of night ; how his approach to a city or village was heralded far beyond its outermost corners with lightning rapidity ; how the masses were all agog about his visit ; in what vast crowds men, women and children got round his banner and hung on every word that fell from his lips in simple child-like trust, some in pensive sorrow eager

to get rid of a crisis in their life, others, oppressed by troubles, for exorcising obstinate ghosts, others, suffering excruciating tortures caused by inveterate diseases like colic, leprosy etc., imploring him to effect a cure and getting themselves radically cured by his blessing them with a pinch of sacred ashes or a few *Tulsi* [1] leaves, others for some sort of

[1] Tulsi is *Ocymum Sanctum* or Basil plant belonging to the Order *Labiateoe*. It is believed that God Vishnu of the Hindu Trinity is incarnate in the plant and hence it is also called Hari Plant which is held in high veneration among the Hindus. Good luck is said to attend the house in which this plant is reared and watered and the worship of Sri Vishnu is not complete if Tulsi leaves are not offered to Him in *pujas*. A history of its origin is found in the *Padma Purana*. It will not, however, be uninteresting to notice here how the plant has, from time immemorial, been credited with mystic and sacred properties even among the westerners as well.

Basil is derived from the Greek word *basilikon*, meaning Kingly. In France the plant is called *La plante royale* and in Germany *Konig's Krant*. This plant is almost worshipped in the Eastern Church, because, they say that it grew on Christ's grave. On St. Basil's day women take sprigs of this plant to be blessed in Church and cast some on the floor of the house to secure good luck for the ensuing year. They eat a little with the household and maintain that they will be immune from any sickness for a year; they also put some bits on the cupboard to protect their clothes from the depredation of rats, mice, moths etc. for a like period.

According to the Hindu Pharmacopoeia Tulsi plant is of very great value. The leaves possess expectorant properties. Their juice is used in catarrh, bronchitis, stomachic and gastric ailments; when poured into the ears it is an excellent remedy for ear-ache. A decoction of the root is administered in malarial fevers as a diaphoretic. Its seeds are mucilaginous



13. The Sacrosanct Well at Mettukuppam.

family felicity, a few only, real earnest seekers after knowledge, a fewer still, looking to him for inspiration and guidance towards Salvation, and a good number, standing about in knots, as mere spectators having no set-purpose of their own; how sanctified by his very presence the imagination of the unsophisticated rustics blossomed into sense, their innocence transformed into virtue and their inexperienced good nature directed to a generous Love—that exalted Love so very essential, nay, indispensable for the realisation of the eternal Godhood in man; how in all controversies of religious nature during his itinerary, he always stepped in with Olive branch in hand and pleaded for 'Samarasam' or conciliation; how in the penultimate years of his carreer he used to retire into solitude from time to time and emerge with startling suddenness upon a wondering world! how revered and feted alike by all people, irrespective of their smothering religious social and material

and demulcent and are given in cases of disorders of the genito-urinary system.

Keat's poem "Isabella" or the "Pot of Basil" is well known.

conventionalities of a heart-rending nature he now had become in himself a permanent Institution of Love, Devotion and Worship in this Iron Age, even though he did vanish most mysteriously; how, far from being a spent-force, he is now in tune with the infinity of infinities of universes beyond, and omnipresent still radiating his sweet Love for the spiritual satisfaction of humanity at large and yet, not perceived by the mortal eye; and so forth in their Elysian reverie.

So unfarthamable was the compassion of the Swamiji for mankind that his one burning desire was to drive into the minds of the latter the principle of Divine Love. He was to promote Unity among the innumerable cults, creeds, sects and sub-sects into which people have become divided, by breathing into them, the flame of true spiritual vision. And thus all that he sought for is the propagation of the worship of God in spirit and in truth so that there shall be established throughout the world one Holy Human Brotherhood. With no axe of his own to grind, and with no personal ambition to achieve, he entered heart and soul into

this great task and fought tooth and nail against the general apathy of masses, who could not read the hieroglyphic of human existence. But eloquent as his appeal was to their moral consciousness, it is a thousand pities that he could make but little headway in this noble endeavour. With a humanitarian mission, it was that the Swamiji appeared in the field as a spiritual Doctor who shall be called here the Saviour, which indeed he was. He did touch and cut the dangerous sores. His scientific scalpel would certainly have ensured the Eternal health and happiness and thus saved the wreck of life of the Patient-society. But the Patient was in high fever of Kama, Krodha, Lopa, Mada, Macharya etc., and the delirium of shadow-pleasures, to boot. It refused to undergo the necessary operation. It simply spurned his prescriptions, golden, yet, free and gratituous though they had been. Was this all? They even feel foul of the Dr. Saviour. Pity! Pity! Pity! how would the Swamiji have felt in an atmosphere of this kind! How could he help the situation in the teeth of such stubborn incredulity and perversity. Fie upon the

people who entirely missed knowing him truely. He realised that the time was not ripe enough for his practice. Gently he retired, therefore, leaving the field clear for the triumph of Mammon for the time being; however, he willed that there shall, in the interregnum, come into play, the Great Law in the Economy of Nature, "The survival of the Fittest,", which gives the death-knell to the vicious! Alas that the people should show a cold shoulder in so fundamental an issue as the prevention of their own self-slaughter with all its attendant result of hideous and eternal torture, is, to say the least, deplorable in the extreme; of this, he has expressed himself most bitterly on more occasions than one.

Coming to his Gospel, it must be said that it comprised all that is great, noble and beautiful in life. From the view-point of spirituality and catholicity of conception, it is an admirable message as charitably broad based as it is scrupulously undogmatic. It is a comprehensible exposition of the philosophy of life on a purely commonsense practical basis. It indicates only the fundamental

essence of Truth latent in the diverse religions without embracing anything noxious or irritating to any of them. His is therefore "*Wisdom Religion*;" *Samarasam* is his watchword, a word which carries with it very large implications and has a world of meaning; *Sanmargam* is the framework of his philosophy; *Love* is his God; *Ahimsa* is the bee-line to reach Him; *Truth* is his standard; and *Universal Brotherhood* is the all-consuming ambition of his life, which runs as a thread through the main incidents of his life and works. Not the least important feature of Swamiji's achievements, which is worthy of being recorded here, is his Satya Gnana Sabha, the Shrine of unique Brotherhood, which, reconciling the palpable irreconcilable points in the various religions, stands as the very ennobling and truly inspiring monument to his greatness, unknown and unheard of in any other part of the Globe. A world-reformer, he has erected for himself a niche in the Temple of Fame; for his name will for all time, be handed down to posterity for the consummate skill and wisdom with which he had found a concrete basis for the abstruse

things of the spirit. To the masses all the world over it is more than the Wisdom of all the books put together. It unfolds the great life-principle and throws helpful light to enable them to understand the vast map of Humanity and thus serves to awaken in them, a sense of equality and kinship. It stands for the solidarity of all human race. It is indeed the Pharos or beacon-light of Humanity, struggling in the waters of Existence, bringing home *inter-alia*, in a clear-cut impressive way to the man in the street the deeper values of life, side by side with the fundamental concordance of World-Religions whose followers, no matter who they are or whence they come, will, therefore, seldom fail to be profited by the flood of light which his teachings shed upon the intricate problems of life.

How shall we end the discourse better than by quoting the following extracts from James Allen, a modern mystic, and leaving it to our readers to note the points of resemblance.

"Man's true place in the cosmos is that of a king, not a slave, a commander under the Law of Good and

not a helpless tool in the reign of evil. His own body and mind are the dual dominion over which he is to reign, a Lord of Truth, the master of himself, the conqueror of sin and shame and sorrow, the wise user and controller of the store of pure eternal and creative energy which is never tiring, exhaustible and apparently eternal in its operation, moving in atom and in star and informing the fleeting shapes of time with its restless, glowing, pulsating power and which manifests in him through a combination of mental faculties as affection, passion, intelligence, morality, reason, understanding and wisdom. Let him walk the earth unashamed unabashed, strong, valiant, tender and benign; no longer prostrate in self-abasement but walking erect in the dignity of perfect manhood; not grovelling in selfishness and remorse and crying for pardon and mercy, but standing firm and free in the sublime majesty of sinless Life."

" I see coming upon the earth a new race of men and women, men who will be men indeed strong, upright, noble, too wise to stoop to anger, uncleanness, strife and hatred; women who will be women indeed, gentle, truthful and pure, too pitiful to stoop to gossip, slander and deception; and from their loins will proceed superior beings of the same noble type; and the dark fiends of error and evil will fall back at their approach; they will regenerate the earth; they will dignify man and vindicate nature, restoring humanity to Love, happiness and peace; and the life of victory over sin and sorrow will be established on the earth."

We have reached one of those epochs in the world's progress which witness the passing of the false gods—the gods of human selfishness and human illusion. The new-old revelation of one universal impersonal Truth has again dawned upon the world and its searching light has carried consternation to

the perishable gods who take shelter under the shadow of self. Men have lost faith in God who can be cajoled, who rules arbitrarily and capriciously, subverting the old order of the things to gratify the wishes of his worshippers and are turning with a new light in their eyes and new joy in their hearts, to the God of Law. And to Him they turn not for personal happiness and gratification, but for knowledge, for understanding, for wisdom, for liberation from the bondage of Self. And thus turning they do not seek in vain nor are they sent away empty and discomfited. They find within themselves the reign of Law that every thought, every impulse, every act, and every word brings about a result in exact accordance with its own nature; that thoughts of Love bring about beautiful and blissful conditions, that hateful thoughts bring about distorted and painful conditions, that thoughts and acts good and evil are weighed in the faultless balance of the Supreme Law and receives their equal measure of blessedness on the one hand and misery on the other. Thus finding they enter a new path of obedience to the Law. Entering that path they no longer accuse, no longer doubt, no longer fret and despond, for they know now, that God is right and universal Laws are right, the cosmos is right and that they themselves are wrong, if wrong there is, and that their salvation depends upon themselves, upon their own efforts, upon their personal acceptance of that which is good and deliberate, rejection of that which is evil. No longer merely hearers, they become doers of the word and they acquire knowledge, they receive understanding, they grow in wisdom, and they enter into the glorious life of liberation from the bondage of self. There is no longer greater liberty than utmost obedience to the Law of Being.

And the Law is that the heart shall be purified, the mind regenerated and the whole being brought in subjection to Love till self is dead and Love is all in all, far the reign of Law is the reign of Love. Love waits for all, rejecting none, Love may be claimed and entered into now for it is the heritage of all. Ah! Beautiful Truth! To know that now, man may accept his divine heritage and enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Verily the Law reigneth and reigneth for ever, Justice and Love are its eternal ministers ".

May the all-powerful God, that created us in His infinite Wisdom, help us in His bountiful Mercy, with the Light of His Grace and enable us to share His eternal Love, a Love that knows " no Illusion," knows " no Darkness " and knows " no Death."

THE END

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

EXTRACT FROM "THE THEOSOPHIST" JULY 1882.

EDITED BY MADAME H. P. BLAVATSKY.*

Coming events foretold.**

When, in answer to a direct challange, the author of The Occult World wrote to the Bombay Gazette (April 4, 1882), he began his letter with the following profession of faith:—

"I was already sure, when I wrote "The Occult world," that the Theosophical Society was connected, through Madame Blavatsky, with the great Brotherhood of Adepts I described. I now know this to be the case, with much greater amplitude of knowledge." Little did our loyal friend fancy, when he was penning these lines, that his assertion would one day be capable of corroboration by the testimony of thousands. But such is now the state of the case. Sceptics and

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* Madame H. P. Blavatsky, daughter of Lieutenant General Alexis Hahn von Rottenstern-Hahn; grand daughter of Privy Gouncillor Andrew Fadeew and of Princess Helene Dolgorouki; and the relict of the Councillor of State, Nicephore Blavatsky, late Vice Governor of the province of Erivan, Caucasus of H.I.M. the Czar of Russia.

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prejudiced or interested witnesses in general may scoff as they like, the fact cannot be gainsaid. Our friends—and we have some who regard us neither as lunatics nor imposters—will at least be glad to read the statement which follows.

While at Madras, we were told that a well-known Tamil Scholar, a Pandit in the Presidency College, desired to have a private conversation with us. The interview occurred in the presence of Mr. Singaravelu, President of the Krishna Theosophical Society, and of another trustworthy Theosophist, Mr. C. Aravamudu Ayangar, A Sanskritist, of Nellôre. We are no more at liberty to repeat here all the questions put to us by the interviewer than we are to divulge certain other facts, which would still more strongly corroborate our repeated assertions that (1) our Society was founded at the direct suggestion of Indian and Tibetan Adepts; and (2) that in coming to this country we but obeyed their wishes. But we shall, leave our friends to draw their own inferences from all the facts. We are glad to know that the learned Pandit is now engaged in writing, in the Tamil and Telugu languages a more amplified narrative than he has given here; and that he is taking steps to obtain certificates of respectable living witnesses who heared his Guru prefigure the events, which have had so complete a fulfilment—(ED).

STATEMENT OF THOLUVORE VELAYUDHAM MUDALIAR, SECOND TAMIL PANDIT OF THE PRESIDENCY COLLEGE, MADRAS.

To the Author of "Hints on Esoteric Theosophy"

Sir,—I beg to inform you that I was a Chela of the late "Arulprakasa Vallalar," otherwise known as Chithambaram Ramalinga Pillay Avergal, the celebrated Yogi of Southern India. Having come to know that the English Community, as well as some Hindus, entertained some doubts as to the existence of the Mahatmas (Adepts), and, as to the fact of the Theosophical Society having been formed under their special orders; and having heard moreover, of your recent work, in which much pains are taken to present the evidence about these Mahatmas pro and con— I wish to make public certain facts in connection with my late revered Guru. My belief is, that they ought effectually to remove all such doubts, and prove that Theosophy is no empty delusion, nor the society in question founded on an insecure basis.

Let me premise with a brief description of the personality of, and the doctrines taught by,the above mentioned ascetic, Ramalinga Pillay.

He was born at Maruthur, Chithambaram Taluq, South Arcot, Madras Presidency. He come to live at Madras at an early period of his career, and dwelt there for a long time. At the age of nine, without any reading, Ramalingam is certified by eye-witnesses to have been able to recite the contents of the works of Agustia and other Munis equally respected by

Dravidians and Aryans. In *1849* I become his disciple, and, though no one knew where he had been initiated, some years after, he gathered a number of disciples around him. He was a great Alchemist. He had a strange faculty about him, witnessed very often, of changing carnivorous person into a vegetarian ; a mere glance from him seemed enough to destroy the desire for animal food. He had also the wonderful faculty of reading other men's minds. In the year 1855, he left Madras for Chidambaram, and thence to Vadalur and Karingooli where he remained a number of years. Many a time, during his stay there, he used to leave his followers, disappearing to go no one knew whither, and remaining absent for more or less prolonged periods of time. In personal appearance, Ramalingam was a moderately tall, spare man—so spare, indeed, as to virtually appear a skeleton—yet withal a strong man, erect in stature, and walking very rapidly; with a face of a clear brown complexion, a straight, thin nose, very large fiery eyes, and with a look of constant sorrow on his face. Towards the end he let his hair grow long ; and, what is rather unusual with Yogis, he wore shoes. His garments consisted but of two pieces of white cloth. His habits were excessively abstemious. He was known to hardly ever take any rest. A strict vegetarian, he ate but once in two or three days, and was then satisfied with a few mouthfuls of rice. But when fasting for a period of two or three months, he literally ate nothing, living merely on warm water with a little sugar dissolved in it.

As he preached against caste, he was not very popular. But still people of all castes gathered in large numbers around him. They came not so much for his teachings, as in the hope of witnessing and learning phenomena, or "miracles," with the power of producing which he was generally credited; though he himself discredited the idea of anything supernatural, asserting constantly that his was religion based on pure science. Among many other things he preached that:

(1) Though the Hindu people listened not to him, nor gave ear to his counsels, yet the esoteric meaning of the Vedas and other sacred books of the East would be revealed by the custodians of the secret—the Mahatmas—to foreigners who would receive it with joy;

(2) that the fatal influence of the Kalipurusha Cycle, which now rules the world, will be neutralized in about 10 years;

(3) that the use of animal food would be gradually relinquished;

(4) that the distinction between races and castes would eventually cease, and the principle of Universal Brotherhood would eventually be accepted, and Universal Brotherhood would be established in India;

(5) that what men call "God" is, in fact, the principle of Universal Love—which produces and

sustains perfect Harmony and Equilibrium throughout all nature;

(6) that men when once they have ascertained the divine power latent in them, would acquire such wonderful powers as to be able to change the ordinary operations of the Law of gravity, &c. &c.

In the year 1867, he founded a society under the name of *Sumarasa Veda Sanmarga Sungham*, which means a society based on the principle of Universal Brotherhood, and for the propagation of the true Vedic doctrine. I need hardly remark that these principles are identically those of the Theosophical Society. Our society was in existence for five or six years, during which time a very large number of poor and infirm persons were fed at the expense of its members.

When he attained his 54th year (1873) he began to prepare his disciples for his departure from the world. He annonced his intention of going into Samadhi. During the first half of 1873 he preached most forcibly his views upon Human Brotherhood. But during the last quarter of the year, he gave up lecturing entirely and maintained an almost unbroken silence. He resumed speech in the last days of January, 1874, and reiterated his prophecies hereinafter narrated. On the 30th of that month, at Metucuppam, we saw our master for the last time. Selecting a small building, he entered its solitary room after taking an affectionate farewell of his Chelas,

stretched himself on the carpet, and then, by his orders, the door was locked and the only opening walled up. But, when a year later, the place was opened and examined, there was nothing to be seen but a vacant room. He left with us a promise to reappear some day, but would give us no intimation as to the time, place, or circumstances. Until then, however, he said that he would be working not in India alone, but also in Europe and America and all other countries, to influence the minds of the right men to assist in preparing for the regeneration of the world.

Such, in short, is the history of the great man. The facts I have referred to above are within the knowledge of thousands of people. His whole occupation was the preaching of sublime moral, doctrines contained in the Hindu Shastras, and the instilling into the masses of the principles of Universal Brotherhood, benevolence and charity. But to his great disappointment he found among his large congregations but few who would appreciate his lofty ethics. During the latter part of his visible earthly career, he often expressed his bitter sorrow for this sad state of things, and repeatedly exclaimed:—

" You are not fit to become members of this Society of Universal Brotherhood. The real members of that Brotherhood are living far away, towards the North of India. You do not listen to me. You do not follow the principles of my teachings. You seem

to be determined not to be convinced by me. *YET THE TIME IS NOT FAR OFF WHEN PERSONS FROM RUSSIA, AMERICA* (these two countries were always named), and other foreign lands *WILL COME TO INDIA AND PREACH TO YOU THIS SAME DOCTRINE OF UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD.* Then only will you know and appreciate the grand truths that I am now vainly trying to make you accept. You will soon find that *THE BROTHERS WHO LIVE IN THE FAR NORTH* will work a great many wonders in India, and thus confer incalculable benefits upon this our country."

The prophecy has, in my opinion, just been literally fulfilled. The fact, that the Mahatmas in the North exist, is no new idea to us, Hindus; and the strange fact that the advent of Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott from Russia and America was foretold several years before they came to India, is an incontrovertible proof that my Guru was in communication with those Mahatmas under whose directions the Theosophical Society was subsequently founded.

THOLUVURE VELAYUDHAM MUDALIAR, F.T.S.

Witnesses:—

MUNJACUPPUM SINGARAVELU MUDALIAR,
President of the
Krishna Theosophical Society.

KUMBACONUM ARAVAMUDU AYANGAR,
Fellow of the
Nellore Theosophical Society.

"The official position of Vellaya Pandit as one of the Pandits of the Presidency College is an ample guarantee of his respectability and trustworthiness."

G. MUTTUSWAMY CHETTY,
Judge of the Small Cause Court, Madras.
Vice-President of the
Madras Theosophical Society.

Editor's Note:—This is one of those cases of previous foretelling of a coming event which is least of all open to suspicion of bad faith. The honourable character of the witness, the wide publicity of his Guru's announcements, and the impossibility that he could have got from public rumour, or the journals of the day, any intimation that the Theosopical Society would be formed and would operate in India—all these conspire to support the inference that Ramalingam Yogi was verily in the counsels of those who ordered us to found the Society. In March 1873, we where directed to proceed from Russia to Paris. In June, we were told to proceed to the United States where we arrived on July 6th. This was the very time when Ramalingam was most forcibly prefiguring the events which should happen. In October 1874, we received an intimation to go to Chittenden Vermont, where, at the famous homestead of the Eddy family, Colonel Olcott was engaged in making his investigations—now so celebrated in the annals of Spiritualism—of the so-called "materialization of Spirits."

November, 1875, the Theosophical Society was founded, and it was not until 1878, that the correspondence began with friends in India, which resulted in the transfer of the Society's Head-quarters to Bombay in February, 1879.

APPENDIX II

VADALUR

And how to get there and back.

To those who have a good mind to visit Vadalur, in or near which are situated all the important places of worship connected with the Swamiji, the following directions may be useful.

It is a happy augury that Vadalur has now been blessed with the amenities of Railway connection. The Railway Station which is situated in the heart of Vadalur is just within sight of the Gnana Sabha on the Chord line, newly formed, between Cuddalore O. T. on the main line of the S.I.Ry. and Vridhachalam on the Trichinopoly—Villupuram line, also newly formed. And too much cannot be said on the facilities thus offorded to the pilgrim-public.

As regards the old Routes perhaps the following two deserve mention here :—

I. *Via* Chidambaram and the other

II. *Via* Alappakam,

both forming the Railway Stations on the main line of the S.I.Ry., 154 miles and 137 miles respectively, to the South of Madras.

CHIDAMBARAM ROUTE

Vadalur is 20 miles north of Chidambaram, 6 hours journey by the country cart and 3 hours by fast

jutka. During the festival time, Motors are plying between the Railway Station and Vadalur, but on ordinary days, jutkas and bullock carts are the only modes of conveyance readily available.

For a fast jutka, the hire is probably from Rs. 2-8 to Rs. 4 while that for a double bullock cart, is from Rs. 2. to Rs. 3. Higher rates do obtain at times. Of course in respect of these fares, nothing can be definitely laid down here as everything depends upon the supply and demand as regulated by the prevailing circumstances and the then local conditions.

For some miles from the Railway Station the roads being metalled, are hard, and the remaining portion consists of *kutcha* road. On the whole, these roads are fairly fair for any kind of traffic during the summer season, but subject to slips in the rainy days, owing to the clayey nature of the soil in some parts.

No doubt the journey will appear to be an irksome one, but the eyes and mind of the traveller, as he is borne away at a gentle trot through these long and winding roads, will feast upon many sunny landscapes, small ponds, paddy fields and medows, isolated groups of low and rudely-fashioned thatched huts and topes planted with mango-trees, stately palms and cocanuts pointing to the skies, these and many other panoramic views in their wild and rugged grandeur will certainly go a great way to fill up the vacancies of his attention, and beguile the tediousness of his time.

Apropos it may be mentioned that Chidambaram the favourite resort of the Swamiji, is itself one of the holiest places of the Hindus, far-famed as much for its legendary antiquity as for its historic associations. And naturally pilgrims, bent upon visiting Vadalur, will not be without combining their trip with a pilgrimage to this place as well. It has many large temples worthy of close inspection the principal of which is called the Sabhanaikar Koil or Kanaka Sabha ("Golden Shrine"). The entire fabric, which includes a wonderful pillared hall of 1000 pillars, all monolithes varying in heights from 26 to 40 feet, covers an area of 39 acres of ground; it is regarded as the terrestrial counterpart of the celestial Kailas, the Siva's Heaven. Two colossal walls, one within the other, surround it with a majestic Gopura at each of the four corners which stands out as an exquisite piece of decorative architecture. There is a Ganesh-Chapel, which is said to contain the largest image of the god in the whole of India. The great sages Patanjali, Vyagrapada and a host of others of their sacred group are considered to reside here incognito. Further, the seating of the recent *Raja Sir Annamalay University* here has marked it out as one of the great academic metropolises in India and thus earned for it a reputation, that has been the envy of her sisters, particularly in Southern India. There are several Chuttrams and rest-houses for pilgrims. The town boasts of a dak-bungalow also but it is two miles away from the station.

Pilgrims may travel here either by rail or otherwise *en route* to, or from, Vadalur according to convenience.

Five miles off Chidambaram is the thriving and populous village called Bhavangheri, lying on the bank of the river Vellar. To those, who pursue the land-route, this serves as a halting place ; they may resume their journey, after taking a short respite for a repast, to reach Vadalur or Chidambram, as the case may be, at one stretch.

The most Important point in favour of this route is that travellers wishing to alight at this station and requiring information or arrangements made for carriages etc., can depend upon having the needful done for them, should they address the station-master of this place sufficiently beforehand in the matter.

ALAPPAKAM ROUTE

This is an alternate route. The place is but a small way-side station and the distance thence to Vadalur is only 12 miles. It is a dreary place, traversed by jungles and notorious for daring decoty: pilgrims are therefore cautioned not to have recourse to this route particularly in the night time, save under strong escorts or when they are in large groups sufficiently well armed.

Here also motor services are available between this station and Vadalur during the festival days but, at ordinary times one will have to content oneself with a single or double bullock cart, and even these tardy conveyances are, at times, few and far between in the place.

CLIMATE CONDITIONS.

Vadalur is a smiling spot in the midst of picturesque surroundings. Here the atmosphere is always serene, lovely and free from the foulness and contamination commonly met with in the case of towns. It is a calm centre of study, contemplation and penance; it lays its spell over every one, and people will, therefore, seldom fail to appreciate the beauty, the peace and the spirit of happiness which nature sheds around them here.

ACCOMMODATIONS AND MESSING ARRANGEMENTS

After arrival at Vadalur, pilgrims will find no difficulty in the matter of food or shelter, for, it contains the Dharmasala founded by the Swamiji. There is also the Gurukal's (priest's) house, besides many private choultries, whose inmates never spare any pains to cater for the needs of the pilgrims, who may, therefore rest assured that they can make themselves comfortable here.

A WORD ABOUT THE MAP.

The routes herein described are fairly suitable in the generality of cases. However, there may, and most probably, will be, instances in which other routes would be felt more advantageous under varying curcumstances. It is to meet all such wants, the accompanying Map has been prepared. It has been made to tell more than many words of description which will, therefore, prove a great help, particularly to such of them as are inclined to take a trip to the place.

APPENDIX III

The following explanation seems called for in view of the remark made by the learned Lieut-Col. Skipwith in his Foreword to this book regarding Earth (Page 35, Foot-note 1).

In the foot-note it has been said of the Zodiac as "the apparant trace or belt containing............etc." The word "apparent" has been used. Hence by the path of the Sun it is meant the apparent path of the Sun regarding the Earth as fixed. Even in modern times astronomers often speak of "the motion of the Sun around the Earth," by which they imply "the apparant motion of the Sun to an observer on the Earth (*i.e.* regarding the Earth as fixed)." Hence by the word "passage" in the last but one line in the foot-notes, it is meant "apparent passage." However, the word "apparent" must have been added to make it clear. The omission is regretted.

It would be foreign to the purpose under reference to dilate further upon the subject. Anyway, suffice it to mention here that the fact, that the Earth rotates or spins on its axis and revolves round the Sun, can hardly be gainsaid : this theory was known to the Hindus thousands of years before the birth of Copernicus, who it is that subverted the old *Ptolemaic system*, current at the time in Europe, which supposed that the Earth was the centre round which all the heavenly bodies actually revolved.

INDEX.

Observe—In the following Index the numbers indicate the pages. When more than one page is given, the numbers are separated by semicolons. A unit separated from a preceding number by a comma, indicates the number of a footnote.

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17	(Foot-notes)	8	Shepherd	Cowherd
22		2	Stupi	Stoobhi
22	(Foot-notes)	1	Pinacle	Pinnacle
26	(Foot-notes)	4	Primodial (energy)	Primordial energy
30	(Foot-notes)	11	Jivatma	Jivatman
45		4	Mental working	Mind-working
45		6	Breaths	Breathes
52		4	Cast	Caste
89		15	World conqueror	World-conqueror
95	(Foot-note)	1	Guna	Guna[1]
96		5	Raja-yaga	Raja-yoga
135		22	Feel	Fell

Supplement

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42	4	occurance	occurrence
42	16	cannote	connote
45	3	substler	subtler
52	15	heresays	heresys
52	30	immoculate	immaculate
53	27 (last line)	ntegrity	integrity
62	8	reech	reach
64	7	abstain	abstains
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92	3	predomi-nently	predomi-nantly
95 (foot-note)	5 & 6	embrayo	embryo
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108 (foot-note)	8	vivefies	vivifies

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